



KIRK CONNELLY, W

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Now Ready:

CANADIAN OVERTONES

An anthology of Canadian poetry published originally in Icelandic, Swedish, Norwegian, Hungarian, Italian, Greek, and Ukrainian, and now translated and edited by **WATSON KIRKCONNELL**, M.A.; F. R. Hist. Soc.; Knight Officer of the Order of Polonia Restituta (Poland); Honorary Foreign Member of the Petőfi Társaság (Hungary); Honorary Corresponding Member of the Institut Historique de France; Honorary Life Member, Þjóðræknisfélag Íslendinga í Vesturheimi; Professor of Classics, Wesley College, Winnipeg. First edition, 1935, Columbia Press, Winnipeg. Paper covers, 104 pages. *Price, postpaid, \$1.00.*

This volume, based on several years of research, presents representative specimens from the work of fifteen Icelandic-Canadian poets, five Swedish-Canadians, three Hungarian-Canadians, one Italian-Canadian, one Greek-Canadian, and seventeen Ukrainian-Canadians. Each language-group is prefaced by a critical and historical introduction, and there are biographical and bibliographical notes on each poet. There is also a general introduction on the collective significance of these poetic movements. This volume is a pioneer work in its field, and constitutes the only available authority on the foreign language poetries of Canada.

Review Copy.

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by

WATSON KIRKCONNELL
M.A., F. R. Hist. S.



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Preface

This book seeks to reveal to English-speaking Canadians a transient but intensely significant phase of our national literature. It is not generally realized that during the past thirty years the published poetry of the "New Canadians" has exceeded in bulk all Canadian poetry published in French; while in Western Canada, at any rate, this unknown poetry has surpassed that of Anglo-Canadians both in quantity and in quality.

That this striking outburst of poetic activity is only transitory, I am regretfully confident. It is the experience of our Western schools and colleges that New Canadians of the third generation cannot speak any language other than English. Failing continuous reinforcements of new immigrant stock, or a change in the Canadian attitude towards the non-Anglo-Saxon traditions, the impulse towards creative expression in a variety of European tongues will inevitably languish and die. Just as Gaelic and Welsh have largely disappeared in the Celtic-speaking communities of Eastern Canada, so will these more recent linguistic arrivals be dissolved away by the constant all-pervasive flood of English from the school, the press, and the radio.

Brevity of existence is, however, no indication of futility. Dawn and sunset, the flowers of spring, human life itself, all these have timeless values although their beauty dislimns and vanishes before our eyes. Insofar as this newer Canadian poetry has achieved the abiding qualities of true art, it will remain a cherished possession for all who have the ability to appreciate it.

Apart from such absolute values, this poetry, whether great or at times only striving imperfectly towards greatness, is an incomparable revelation to Canada of the mind and heart of these more recent Canadians. Our national

attitude towards them has already passed through two ignorant and discreditable phases. In the first phase, we tended to despise them as European coolies, imported to do heavy work for which our hands had already grown too delicate. In the second and more recent phase, we have been patronizingly interested in their folk-costumes and folk-dances, picturesque incidentals which have about as much vital share in their lives as the kilt and the Highland fling have in that of the average Scotch-Canadian. Their poetry, however, may help us to develop a third and much truer attitude towards them, as "beings breathing thoughtful breath", men and women as capable as any amongst us of appreciating the beauties and the philosophies of this world.

I foresee a further value in this poetry. It should help to develop in succeeding generations a Canadianism nourished by pride in the individual's racial past. There is nothing so shallow and sterile as the man who denies his ancestry. The "one hundred per cent." American (or Canadian) is commonly one who has deliberately suppressed an alien origin in order to reap the material benefits of a well-advertised loyalty. There can be little hope of noble spiritual issues from such a prostituted patriotism. Unfortunately, it is abetted by the ignorant assumption of many an English-speaking citizen that alien origin is a natural mark of inferiority. He who thinks thus is a mental hooligan—whether he be lawyer, militia colonel, or bishop of the church. What we sorely need, on the contrary, is enough common intelligence to recognize both the rich diversity of racial gifts on this earth and the strength which racial roots can contribute to the individual.

We do not think the less of the Scot in Canada because of his proud wistfulness towards the land of his origin:

"From the lone sheiling in the misty island
Mountains divide us, and a waste of seas;
But still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland,
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides."

The nostalgia of that utterance still has power to stir the Scotch-Canadian who is four generations removed from

the country of his forebears. As a Canadian, he is not poorer but richer because he realizes his place in a notable stream of human relationship down through the centuries. His sense of the family, the clan, and the race can scarcely fail to vitalize the quality of his citizenship. He grows greater than himself by virtue of his conscious pride in the past and his determination to be worthy of it.

Prophetic hopes would envisage a future Canada in which every individual would be thus inspired to fuller citizenship by his realization of his origin, whatever that might be. There is already, however, grave danger of the third and even the second generation of Swedish, Ukrainian, and other immigrant groups turning their backs on the language and history of their own people in a hasty act of renunciation. That they should be speedily integrated into loyal co-operation with our general Canadian population is, of course, of supreme national importance. But it would be tragic if there should at the same time be a clumsy stripping-away of all those spiritual associations with the past which help to give depth and beauty to life.

Here it is that these new Canadian poetries, themselves the "overtones" of our national literature, may assist in preserving the overtones of our national experience by awakening or preserving in our manifold racial strains an awareness of something sprung from their own blood which can be at once a glory to their fathers and an inspiration to their children's children.

No graver problem for educationalists exists in this country than that of preserving for the future the full potentialities of our several peoples. In that problem, certain fundamentals should never be forgotten: For instance, the state exists, not as an end in itself, but in order to promote and make possible "the good life" for its human society. This "good life" involves far more than economic competence, the possession of some of the toys of modern science, and the pedagogic inculcation of standardized factual information or professional skill; it rather goes on to seek the highest possible realization of personality. This realization of personality in the individual is closely linked up with the national character which racial consti-

Perhaps
so, but
what we
want is
Canadian
spiritual
association
not Swedish
or Ukrainian

tution and historical experience have wrought out in the group from which he comes. Such an ethos cannot be casually passed from one individual to another like a jack-knife or a lesson in geometry. Moreover, a man's spiritual life, other things being equal, is as naturally nourished by his racial ethos as a plant by the soil to which ecology has adapted it. Orchids do not flourish on clay nor wheat and barley in a peat bog. It is through recognition of this principle that the newer educational policies in British tropical Africa are seeking to evolve good Africans and not imitation Europeans.

Canada has not yet achieved any such spiritual integration as has brought Celt, Angle, Saxon, Dane, Norseman, Norman, and Fleming to a unified consciousness in England; and we must realize that the integration to which we ultimately attain will be very different from that of England. If however, we accept, with Wilhelm von Humboldt, "the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity," then we shall welcome every opportunity to save for our country every precious element of individuality that is available. Our constitution is founded on the federal principle. [Our nation could not do better than to take "confederation" as its motto in culture and education. Our national holidays might well be given over to such pageantry (including, perhaps, festivals of drama, poetry, and music) as would emphasize the co-operative existence of the distinct racial groups in our population. Our schools might give ample recognition to their history and culture. Our universities might foster their languages and literatures, or even set up an Institute of Cultural Traditions to preserve and encourage all that may contribute to the diversity of our cultural life.]

These developments lie in the future. It is the modest purpose of this present volume, by revealing to English-speaking Canada that these cultural traditions have already had vital expression in Canadian poetry, to press for a wider conception of national life and national literature.

Watson Kirkconnell.

we should
increasing
island
vision
flourish
in Canada!

yes, but
Canadian
individual-
ity

no!

And rightly! And so shd. we try to make
 Good Canadians of our European immigrants
 other descendants, and not allow them to
 rebuild little ^{cultural} Sweden or Germany or

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Denmark within Canada!

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Icelandic-Canadian Poetry

Icelandic is by far the most important member of the newer group of poetries and the one most entitled therefore to plead for present recognition. Icelandic settlement in Canada began about 1873, and received much encouragement from the sympathetic interest of Lord Dufferin, then governor-general of the Dominion. After unhappy experiences in Ontario and Nova Scotia, most of the newcomers adjourned to the Western prairies and forests and made their homes there. To-day there are about 20,000 Icelanders in Canada. Winnipeg, with 6,000 of them, is the chief Icelandic centre in America, with a larger number of that race than any town in Iceland itself except the capital, Reykjavik.

The Icelanders brought with them to Canada the consciousness of a great literary tradition. The Norse nobles who colonized Iceland in the 9th century had been eminent in poetry; throughout the Middle Ages the island supplied the Scandinavian world with most of its skalds; and at the time of the 19th century emigration to Canada, a new flowering-period in Icelandic poetry was at its height in the work of Grímur Thomsen, Steingrímur Thorsteinsson, and Matthías Jochumsson. It is small wonder that the stirring experiences of travel and settlement should find expression in poetry.

Newspapers in Icelandic were established almost immediately "Framfari" (now extinct) was founded at Icelandic River, Manitoba, in 1887; and the Winnipeg weeklies, "Höfmskringla" and "Lögborg", have been issued without interruption since 1886 and 1888 respectively. These, as well as a number of annuals and monthlies, have been very generous in their printing of poetry and have contributed beyond calculation to the development of an Icelandic literature in Canada. Many of these printing offices have also engaged in book publication (in Icelandic), although authors frequently publish in Reykjavik in order to bring their work before a larger Icelandic-speaking audience.

Easily the most important Icelandic-Canadian poet is Stephan G. Stephansson (1853-1927). Born in Iceland, at Kirkjuhóll in Skagafjörð, a farm since deserted, he came to the New World in 1873, at the age of 20. After several years experience in Wisconsin and North Dakota, he finally settled in Southern Alberta, about thirty miles from Red Deer. Farming was his means of livelihood, and was faithfully attended to; but he lived for literature. One room of the little farm-house was lined with bookshelves, filled with the English and Scandinavian classics; in the midst stood a table and a chair; and there, for forty years, he devoted every available hour to deep study and creative writing. Recognition came to him early and in ample measure. Anglo-Canadians might not be aware of his literary existence; but his fellow Icelanders, both in Canada and in Iceland, were soon convinced of the emergence of a major poet. When he visited Iceland in 1917, he was given a royal reception by the whole nation as one of the great poets of modern times. Professor Sigurður Nordal of the University of Iceland has written quite categorically that Stephan G. Stephansson is the greatest poet in any language that has yet appeared in any of the British Dominions. So far as Canada is concerned, his supremacy in sheer bulk of output is easily vindicated; for his collected poetry, in five large volumes, totals over 1500 pages, while his nearest competitors have scarcely half that extent of work to show. A comparison of poetic quality is a much more difficult matter, for differences of language must be weighed, and these are beyond the range of intelligible argument unless one's audience has a fair knowledge of both languages. Translation from either language into the other eliminates nearly everything of poetic value.

I should like to venture the opinion, however, that Stephansson is beyond question the equal of any poet that Canada has yet produced in English or French—and may ultimately be recognized as superior to all. That opinion is based on considerations of prosodic technique, diction, imagination, and intellectual scope.

So far as *craftmanship* goes, he and half a dozen other

Icelandic-Canadian poets can skate circles around our chief Anglo-Canadian poets. The Icelandic requirements of pattern, both in rhythm and in tone-colour, are subtle and complex beyond anything of which English is capable. Icelandic and old Irish poems are in a class by themselves in this matter of elaborate intricacy. In *diction* likewise, Stephansson is manifestly superior to his Anglo-Canadian and French-Canadian rivals. Only E. J. Pratt and Paul Morin are comparable to him in their assiduous study of vocabulary to enrich their art and render it more exact; but Stephansson actually undertook a rigorous survey of the whole range of Old Norse expression—sagas, Eddas, and even place-names—with a view to acquiring a fuller capacity, finer connotations, and the sudden delight of unexpected beauty in phrase. The results are not uniformly successful; there are times when he lapses into the most crabbed harshness; but in his work as a whole he stands amply justified as a great creative worker with language. His gifts of *imagination* are equally notable. His portrayals of the commonplace take on unusual significance through the power of his figures and comparisons. For example, his description (cf. page 21) of a train crossing the prairies by night reaches its climax in a comparison with that Doom-ship of the Old Norse mythology on which, at the end of the world, the armies of hell cross the dark abyss to destroy Ásgard. Only in *intellectual range* is there any doubt as to his supremacy, and even there a case may be made out for him. Although he lacked the foundation of a good education, he rose above this handicap by virtue of the inherent instincts of a scholar and the fundamental sanity of a man living close to the soil. Most of his poetry arises directly from his experience of Canadian life or his reaction to the Canadian scene. Description occupies a major place in his work, and gives a fuller and more significant picture of the Canadian West than is to be found in all other Canadian poets combined; yet were he simply a descriptive poet, he would be classed almost automatically as intellectually second-rate. Underlying his pictorial poetry, however, and expressed explicitly in another great area of his work, is the simple but

profound philosophy of a deeply intellectual peasant—one who feels himself in the most fundamental and enduring of human occupations and has a stern aloofness towards the wealth and social pretensions of city life. His mood is that of Isak in Hamsun's *Growth of the Soil*, but an Isak to whom have been added powers of thought and self-expression.

Next in importance in the older generation is Kristinn Stefánsson (1856-1916), who likewise left Iceland with the first contingent of pioneers in 1873. He spent most of his life as a carpenter in Winnipeg. His extensive poetry was published in two large volumes, *West of the Ocean* (Reykjavik, 1900), and *From Lake and Prairie* (Winnipeg, 1916). In metrical dexterity he is comparable to his older compeer, and in diction he is not far inferior. In force, imagination, and range, however, he comes distinctly second to Stephansson. The main inspiration of his poetry came from the English, American, and Norwegian poets of the 19th century. It is significant that Swinburne and Björnson were his favorites.

Five other poets of the pioneer generation deserve special mention, viz.: Jón Runólfsson (1859-1931), Rev. Jónas Ari Sigurðsson (1865-1933), Jóhann Magnús Bjarnason (born 1866), Dr. Sigurður Júlíus Jóhannesson (born 1868), and Magnús Markússon (born 1868). Jón Runólfsson, who was a country school-teacher in Manitoba for thirty years, is chiefly noteworthy for his translations from English into Icelandic. His version of Tennyson's "Enoch Arden" is an exceptionally fine performance. Runólfsson published a considerable volume of poetry, *Silent Lightning*, in 1924. Jónas Ari Sigurðsson was a distinguished Lutheran clergyman, who wrote fugitive verse of high quality. Jóhann Magnús Bjarnason, a school-teacher, now retired and resident at Elfros, Saskatchewan, is the chief novelist among the Icelandic-Canadians; but he has also written with his left hand a valuable volume of poetry, published in 1898. Dr. Jóhannesson, a Winnipeg physician, has published five volumes of poems and short stories. He is at his best in poetry for children, but is also capable of sounding deeper notes. Magnús Markússon is a Winnipeg

business man, whose abundant verse, chiefly occasional, manifests high technical competence and markedly religious emphasis.

Two intermarried families have contributed four notable names to Icelandic-Canadian poetry. These are Gísli Jónsson of Winnipeg (born 1876), his younger half-brother, Einar P. Jónsson (born 1880), their sister-in-law, Mrs. Jakóbína Jónsson (born 1883), and her father, Sigurbjörn Jóhannsson (1839-1903). The last-named was a farmer in Argyle, Manitoba. He published in 1902, not long before his death, a volume of poems, which, while somewhat untutored in expression, was a direct revelation of pioneer experiences in Western Canada. His daughter Jakóbína was a school-teacher in Manitoba before her marriage to Ísak Jónsson. She has translated extensively from Icelandic poetry into English, and has contributed a great deal of original Icelandic verse to Winnipeg periodicals. She is strongly feminine in her sympathies and subject-matter. Einar P. Jónsson, for many years editor of the weekly newspaper "Lögberg", is one of the most gifted poets now writing in the Canadian West. He is at his best in the lyric, where he combines beauty with an undeniable force of emotion. Gísli Jónsson, a Winnipeg printer and publisher, is also predominantly lyric in his work. Each of the Jónsson brothers has published a substantial volume of poetry, Einar his *Songs of the Wilderness* in 1915 and Gísli his *Birds of Passage* in 1919.

Two very important poets of the younger generation remain to be mentioned: Þorsteinn Þ. Þorsteinsson of Winnipeg (born 1879) and Guttormur J. Guttormsson of Riverton, Manitoba, (born 1878).

Þorsteinn Þorsteinsson was born in Iceland, but since 1901 has been a painter in Winnipeg. He has published two volumes of poetry, *Strands* (1918) and *Home Thoughts* (1921), and since 1925 has issued a small semi-annual magazine named "Saga", largely filled with his own poetry and fiction. His craftsmanship is superb, and he is deeply versed, like most of his race, in the Old Norse literature.

Guttormur J. Guttormsson is noteworthy as the only Icelandic-Canadian poet who has been born in Canada. His birth-place was Icelandic River, Manitoba, in the same backwoods colony that produced Vilhjálmur Stefánsson a few months later. His parents were pioneers, and he himself has never known anything but the back-breaking life of a frontier farmer. He is married and has six children. His education ceased with the elementary schools of the province. Such auspices might well seem unfavorable to literature, and in a sense his development has been seriously thwarted; yet he has published three volumes of poetry and one of drama, and has set the stamp of masterly originality on nearly everything that he has written. Others may excel him in craftsmanship and diction, but even Stephan G. Stephansson does not show an equal force of intellect. Basing his work with stark sincerity on the limited world of his personal experience, he is able to suffuse that subject-matter with the most profound significance. Thus in his poem on "The Care of the Bees" (see page 36), he uses a familiar episode of bee-keeping to adumbrate the spiritual tragedy of his own life. Intellectuality and humour are commonly associated, and Guttormsson does not lack the latter grace. He is, indeed, the wittiest of all the Icelandic-Canadian poets, and is famous for his epigrams and satires.

It is perhaps well that this sketch, which began with Stephan G. Stephansson, should end with Guttormur Guttormsson. These are the highest peaks at the respective ends of the mountain-range we have been exploring. It would be possible to extend the list of poets much further with such more recent writers as Páll Guðmundsson and P. S. Pálsson of Winnipeg, Mrs. Nanna Anderson of West Selkirk, S. E. Björnson and B. J. Hornfjörð of Arborg, Mrs. S. B. Gunnlaugsson of Baldur, Magnús Jóhannesson of Vogar, Paul Bjarnason of Wynyard, and J. H. Húnfjörð of Elfros; but most of these have still a very limited output. One might also add a few veterans of the second rank, such as S. B. Benediktsson, M. Ingimarsson, and Nicholas Ottenson. A much more important

addition might be made by including the Icelandic poets in the contiguous state of North Dakota, whose work has been published, for the most part, in Winnipeg. Such men as Kristján Niels Júlíus, Thorbjörn Bjarnason, and Professor Richard Beck are all really important; but they should probably be omitted, as they are technically citizens of the United States. The evidence for an Icelandic-Canadian poetry is, in any case, amply supported by the thirteen poets whom I have treated in greater detail. Were nothing further to be written in Icelandic in Canada, the poetry already in existence would be an enduring monument to the inspiration of a great epoch.

That such poetry is only a transient chapter in our literary history seems all too evident. It is significant that the only Canadian-born poet among them all is Guttormur J. Guttormsson, now nearly sixty years of age; and that he grew up in an Icelandic-Canadian frontier settlement. Icelandic-Canadians of the third generation rarely speak anything but English, and courses in Icelandic at the University of Manitoba have died out because students are no longer asking for them. It is almost certain that without a continual introduction of fresh settlers from Iceland the ancestral tongue will have died out in Canada by the end of the present century.

That ultimate melting away of Icelandic in the warmer seas of English speech will not, however, alter the fundamental value of the Icelandic-Canadian poetry already written. That will be "a possession forever," the record of the pioneer experience treasured up by the poet's art in the beauty and power of one of the world's great literary languages. The pioneer generations of the English and French in Canada were poetically inarticulate, or worse. It is the glory of the Icelandic settlers that in their first generation among us they have created a poetry, based on Canada and their experience of it, that is worthy of challenging comparison with the best that three centuries have produced in their foster-country.

SIGURBJÖRN JÓHANNSSON (1839-1903)—

Born at Breiðumýri, southern Iceland. Emigrated to Canada in 1889, and settled on a farm in Argyle, in southern Manitoba. Twice married. Father of Jakobína Johnson (q.v.). Published in 1902 a volume of *Poetry* (Winnipeg), dealing largely with the humble themes of pioneer life.

EMIGRATION TO CANADA

I never knew what Dearth's grim hand
To starving mortals meant
Until from out my native land
It gave me banishment.

With half my life-time thrown away,
In exile I must toil,
And rest, when ends my human day,
In this cold, alien soil.

THE AUTHOR'S SHELTER

Though we toss in sorrow's welter,
Though earth's cares torment,
We possess a glorious shelter:
Heaven's high, blue tent.

STEPHAN G. STEPHANSSON (1853-1927)—

Born at Kirkjuhóll-in-Skagafjörð, a farm since deserted. Related, on his father's side, to the provost of the diocese of Holar, and through his mother to the famous poet Benedikt Gröndal. In 1873, as a lad of twenty, he emigrated to the United States, first working as a farm-hand near Milwaukee and later pioneering on his own account in Shawano county, Wisconsin, and, after 1880, in Pembina county, North Dakota. Married Helga Jónsdóttir, 1878, by whom he had three sons and three daughters. In

1889, he removed, with some other Dakotan settlers, to a new pioneering enterprise in Alberta, about eighty miles north of Calgary. As a farmer, took an active part in the development and organization of the Markerville district. After 1900 became recognized as the greatest of all Icelandic-Canadian poets. Visited Iceland, 1917, as the guest of the nation, and was feted in every district of the island. Died on his farm near Markerville in 1927. While much of his poetry still awaits publication, the great bulk of it was issued during his life-time in five large volumes, brought out by popular subscription on the part of admirers in Canada and the United States. These collected works were issued as follows: Vol. I, Reykjavik, 1909, pp. 324; Vol. II, Reykjavik, 1909, pp. 320; Vol. III, Reykjavik, 1910, pp. 240; Vol. IV, Winnipeg, 1923, pp. 306; Vol. V, Winnipeg, 1923, pp. 329.

THE SPRUCE FOREST

Other trees, with taunts and brags,
try in vain, like thee, to grow
under sheer and shadowy crags,
shut in by black bogs below.—
There thy gallant groves aspire,
greenest woods that earth can show.

Surely winter oft has waged
wars of frost about thy feet:
stark as steel, blue ice has raged;
stamping on thy roots' retreat,
lashing all thy limbs with cold,
laming every joint with sleet.

Is thy view not vast and dire,
void of joy?—beneath the hill
gapes a maw of fetid mire,
muck-devouring, hungry still;
while a jaundiced jaw of stone
juts above thee, gaunt and chill.

Yet thou mountest, undismayed,
meetly dressed in patient green—
born to burdens, dolours laid
brutally, with anguish keen,
on thy shoulders; still unshamed
shake thy crests in peace serene.

When, with cruel blizzards, come
cramping frosts all earth to hold,
naked oaks, distorted, numb,—
null, grey ghosts of forests old,—
stretch their limbs like helpless hands,
haggard with the ashen cold.

All alone thou lingerest
lustrous green, O spruce, and sure
as if Summer still possessed
sovereign peace, in thee secure—
a mark of life on marred earth's corpse,
making winter fair and pure.

Green thou art, yea altogether,
growing from thy earliest birth,
green against all winter weather,
waxing ever out of earth
young from root to needles, knowing
naught of naked age or dearth.

Many a man in kindred fashion,
moved on by the winter's blast,
looks on livid bogs of passion
lying rotten, black and vast,
sees the yellow rock-jaw yonder
yawning from the face of Caste.

Yet from shadowed, slimy slopes
slips of life grow green and free;
winter earth, unwarmed of hopes,
watches still the sturdy tree;
nor can blizzards' crescent crash
crush that living liberty.

TO ALBERTA

Ah, holy in the hills' embrace,
Our hardy foster-mother!—
The sunrise seals thy bosom's grace
As seemly as That Other;
With running rivers, silver-clear,
With radiant peak and prairie,
And green, high spruce-slopes groping sheer
To the glittering ice-crag's eyry.

Thy glorious valleys widen down
Through straths and shining passes,
By shelter-belts of forest brown
And hollows warm with grasses,
To a mighty plain of green, that wakes
In a wind that laughs and quivers,
Fringed with a hundred azure lakes,
Embroidered bright with rivers.

Here veils of Northern Light are drawn
On high as winter closes,
And hoary dews at summer dawn
Adorn the wild red roses.
Sometimes the swelling clouds of rain
Blot out the sun's caresses;
But soon the mountains smile again
And shake their icy tresses:

Young mother, like thy circling hills,
Watch ever free and tender
Over an exiled life that thrills
A foster-love to render;
But let thy mountain-guards advance,
Let ice like steel assure thee
Against the rich man's arrogance
And poverty's pale fury.

FRAGMENTS FROM "EN ROUTE"

I.

By prairie and sleugh-side the train that we rode
Drove ever relentlessly north.
To our left the great River lay turbid and red
And sprawled itself sullenly forth.
Its breast never quickened in rapid or fall,
Its dull heavy waters were fain
To waddle forever with arms full of mud
And the slummocky clay of the plain.
The landscape unchanged and unchangeable stood,
Save only where dryads of grace
Had woven on edges of wandering brooks
A leafy embroid'ry of lace;
But the land itself lay like an infinite board,
Unslivered, unknotted, and clean,
As if all of the stuff of Creation were smoothed
And stained an ineffable green.

II.

At dawn, when we woke, there were blankets enough
On the couch where we lay in a row,
For blizzards of midnight upon us had spread
A foot of soft, eider-down snow;
While Providence, kind to the simply devout,
Had buried the Irishman deep,
And drifted above him with evident care
The warmth of the mightiest heap.
But the air was as bitter as death, while the sun
Rose slowly with shivering ire;
The cold scorched our throats, it was flame to our flesh,
And burned in our lungs like a fire.
The bluish-white tide of the snow had engulfed
Each hillock and hollow as well,
And the frost-haggard trees were like pallid, grey ghosts
From the pale, frozen forests of hell.
On the western horizon, dim billows of night

Ebb'd still in cold surges of grey;
The sky leaned and clung to the glacial earth
As if frozen at last to its clay;
And a dark shadow-mouth in the firmament gaped
So swart in the calm, cloudless height
That a black door seemed opening, far up in space,
Upon darkness, blank nothing, and night.

III.

ON THE TRAIN
(The prairies by night)

Out on the platform that coupl'd the cars,
I drank in the night-air alone;
For drugg'd in the thick, heavy vapors within,
Each passenger sat like a stone.
On through the vastness and darkness the train
Kept ever its shadowy way,
With no halt in the heat of its thunderous haste,
No hesitant falter nor stay.
Far out in the infinite vault of the sky,
The stars in their courses look'd on
To mock the machine and its stertorous breath
With flames that for eons had shone.
But the prairies flow'd by like an ebony sea
Of boundless and billowless black,
Where our train, a long Doomship, with belly of fire,
Sought Asgard with death in its track.

Out on the steps, I grew weary alone;
The pleasure in truth is but slight
To wrestle the wind, an importunate mate,
And stare in the eye of the night.
Having found in the past a more excellent way
The dulness of travel to ban,
I wandered unasked to the car next to mine
To study the manners of man.

IV

To strands held by strangers I come with a love
That streams in the tenderest tones,
Yet green are far hillocks that grip at my heart—
The graves of my ancestors' bones.
I know why that homeland has held me so close;
For hued with the mem'ries of yore
Each vista of earth bears a voice from the past
By valley and mountain and shore;
And out of those voices comes strength for the strife,
The strain that man's living requires;
Even so is the sanction that every land gives
Long sacred to mothers and sires.

IN WARTIME

In Europe's reeking slaughter-pen
They mince the flesh of murdered men,
While swinish merchants, snout in trough,
Drink all the bloody profits off!

MY NEW NEIGHBORHOOD

Where the Red Deer River runs
from the Rockies toward the dawn,
through Alberta's bellying hills,
basined strath and grassy lawn,

here the herdsmen have their home,
haunt the hollows and the spurs;
some drive-shambling sheep; some, bulls—
shameless, green-eyed murmurers.

Hell's retired henchmen here,
heaven's lost servants, sullen, slow,
lag like Greeks by Lethe stream,
letting all commandments go.

KRISTINN-STEFÁNSSON (1856-1916)—

Born at Egilsá, Iceland, where his father was a farmer and a practising physician. Emigrated to Canada in 1873, settling first at Rosseau, in the Muskoka district of Ontario, and removing to Winnipeg in 1884. A carpenter by trade. Married Guðrún Jónsdóttir. Moved to Gimli in 1911, but died in Winnipeg in 1916. Self-educated, but very widely read. Published two bulky volumes of verse: *West of the Ocean* (Reykjavik, 1900), and *From Lake and Prairie* (Winnipeg, 1916, pp. 300).

THE OLD HOUSE

Wasted by time and every sort of weather,
Still on its old foundation-stones it stands,
Deep scarr'd on sides and gables altogether
As with the gnarl of aged cheeks and hands;
Its roof-tree grey with countless nights of frost,
The sills on which it totters warp'd or lost.

Still streams the sunlight through the broken sashes,
As bright and gay as in the years now gone,
Age has not turn'd that old content to ashes
Nor cancell'd days on which a glad sun shone.
Still through its southern door, though shatter'd, sing
From radiant skies the breezes of the spring.

Visions borne hither from the vast, far distance,
Throng to my eyes with never a hint of pain;
As in a dream of earlier existence,
Friends that are dead are standing here again;
And old fidelity, old laughter, grace
With holy peace the long deserted place.

As on a monument, there here is written
Plain to my gaze, an epitaph of hope:
Body and spirit might with care be smitten—
I read it in worn plank and floor a-slope—
But through the darkness of dismay and dearth
Shone ever the clear flame of love on earth.

Life, warm and true, abounded in the fulness
Of heart's affection linking friend to friend,
For joy in small things bridged the deeps of dullness
And even death gave speech no palsied end:
In darkest hours, a helping hand or word
Guided to peace a spirit sadly stirr'd.

Here where the land lay empty to the westward,
Fronting the crimson tents of evening light,
We watch'd the sun down stairs of fire turn restward
And pause upon the threshold of the night;
There to embrace the earth before he pass'd
In gentle radiance to his place at last.

Cherish'd remembrance and dilapidation
Brood with join'd hands in this deserted spot;
Old dreams, old memories, without cessation
Roam through these haunts the heart has ne'er forgot;
While, through burst pages there beckons from the west
That evening sunshine that They loved the best.

My heart grows strangely warm when'er I wander
Beside this house I knew so well of yore;
And oft could vow, however much I ponder,
That time stood still, that at this empty door
I linger listening to glad words of trust
From lips that now are silent in the dust.

WINTER

Winter wanders, blue with frost,
Wanly ponders shelter;
Hope all squandered, hapless, lost,
White in yonder welter.

Sits in dread on stones of dearth;
Droops his head with quivers;
Or, instead, he stamps the earth,
Strives to shed his shivers:

Round the fold the snowdrifts reach;
Range the wold, their trophy;
Blizzards cold and coarse of speech
Con an olden strophe.

THE ANSWER

"Who will win?" they sadly asked.
Satan's lying tongue was mute.
Others, answering in his stead,
Offer'd oracles astute.
Belched the cannon, bold of heart,
Blazing like the pit of hell.
"Conquest crowns the stronger part"
Came the foeman's laughing yell.

JÓN RUNÓLFSSON (1859-1930)—

Born in the northeast of Iceland. Emigrated to Minnesota at the age of 20, and two years later went north to Winnipeg. After varied employment, he became a schoolmaster among the Icelandic colonists in 1889, and followed that profession for the next thirty years. One volume of poetry, *Silent Lightning* (Winnipeg, 1924). His best work was in the field of verse translation. His rendering into Icelandic of Tennyson's "Enoch Arden" is particularly good.

A NIGHT OF FROST

When suns of spring shine soft and glad
And waken all the grass of earth,
And opening blossoms burst to birth,
And hills in fragrant peace are clad,
I have, alas, in hours of mirth
By moonlight o'er the meadows straying
Beheld a frost-killed bud displaying
The pallor of its stricken dearth.

And though with dawning came a flood
 Of conquering light for joyous hours,
 One answer failed those radiant powers—
 The kiss of death was on that bud.
 Fair fragrance breathed from meads and bowers,
 And laughing maids sweet wreaths were twining,
 But who would mark one blossom pining
 When life and summer bathe in flowers?

It yields no breath, it bears no bloom,
 Its beauty withers like a dream;
 And yet within its stem the stream
 Of life still pulses in the gloom.
 Come, little friend, my heart can deem
 Your sorrow though none else revere it—
 The kiss of death is on my spirit
 No matter how alive I seem.

IN THE DARK

He meets her in the murky dark
 And murmurs: "Is that you, my life?"
 "No!" she replies. "You needn't spark.
 I'm not your darling—just your wife."

JÓNAS ARI SIGURÐSSON (1865-1933)—

Born May 6, 1865, at Litlu-Ásgeirsá, Iceland. Came to America in 1887. Graduated from the Chicago Lutheran Seminary. Successively minister at Akra, North Dakota; Seattle, Washington; Churchbridge, Saskatchewan; and Selkirk, Manitoba. President, for many years, of the Icelandic National League of America. Married (1) Oddrún Frímansdóttir, (2) Stefánía Ólafsdóttir. Two sons and one daughter. Died in the Winnipeg General Hospital, May 10, 1933. The author of fugitive verse of excellent quality, reflecting the life of the Icelandic pioneers.

ICELANDIC-CANADIANS

We came with our mufflers and wraps for the cold;
 We couldn't speak English at all.

Our varied provision of gear or of gold
Had value incredibly small.
With shoes of warm sheepskin, with bedding of down,
With shawls, pointed bonnets, and bags,
We went to the wilderness, far from the town,
All wistful yet proud in our brags.

Of our outfits, the spruce English natives made sport;
Of the speech of our fathers, made mock;
But the gear of our sires was a durable sort
For settlers by forest and rock.
Our toil and our need took their toll of our dead;
The new tongue was a task to command;
But we lived by our brawn, begging no one for bread,
And built up a place in the land.

Though crippled with sea-surf and sowing of seed
And saddled with back-breaking toil,
We held up our hearts through the night of our need
And the niggardly growth of the soil;
For we brought in our luggage from lands of the North
A legacy meet for the West:
In toiling or governing gladly henceforth
To give our new country our best.

With a third of our life spent, a serious span,
By the sport of the ignorant torn,
We have suffer'd the savagest test of a man,
And silent is Canada's scorn.
The speech of the English grows light on our lip,
The lore of their schools is our own,
And we help at the helm of the government ship
While hazardous gales are outblown.

Though our immigrant raiment and rigging are lost,
Yet our race has its roots in the past.
Recall that your birthright is rare beyond cost,
Your culture a trust to hold fast.
Then sell not your Icelandic sagas and songs
For secular pottage of gold;
Keep blameless the blood that to Vikings belongs;
Guard bravely your language of old.

JÓHANN MAGNÚS BJARNASON (born 1866)—

Born of farming stock at Meðalnes, Norður-Múlasýsla, Iceland. Came with his parents to Nova Scotia at the age of nine. Married Guðrún Hjörleifsdóttir in 1887. From 1889 on, a school-teacher in Western Canada. Now retired, and living in Elfros, Saskatchewan. Easily the most important and productive novelist among the Icelandic-Canadians. His poetry belongs to the earlier stages of his career, in *Tales and Poems* (Winnipeg, 1892, pp. 64) and *Poetry*. (Ísafjörð, 1898, pp. 128).

THE HERDBOY.

Pillars of storm-cloud are piling high,
Fierce o'er the forest's green rim,
And the ground-swell is grieving with sullen sigh
On the rocks at the ocean's brim.
Gusts in the tree-tops grow wild and shrill,
And the leaves lash to and fro;
While out of the deeps of the storm's wild will
Comes a cry of impending woe.

The cowbells no longer are heard to chime,
Though the night is coming on.
If the milking should miss its appointed time,
Then the farmer's wife's temper is gone.
The cows at their hour must reach the house
Or the herdboy will weep and bleed;
And should he come late, and without the cows,
Then his back will be flogg'd indeed.

For who cares at all for the young galoot,
So thoughtless and fond of play?
Twelve winters old, and an orphan to boot—
Who will grieve if he runs away?
Does anyone pity his griefs obscure,
His sorrows and boyish cares?
Does anyone try to prescribe a cure
For the ill that his sad heart bears?

He is only a waif to be knock'd about;
His pleadings but worsen his plight;
And so, like a dog, he is driven out
In the face of the storm and the night.
Sudden the blast breaks with thunderous leap
And the glare of flame's murderous stroke,
Flood on flood falling and hurricane's sweep,
Bending the mightiest oak.

Another year's sun sheds a radiant glow
On the green of the forest's rim;
And the lispings ground-swell is murmuring low
On the sands at the ocean's brim;
The cowbells tinkle along the slope
Where the kine through the glad trees roam;
But the orphan herdboys, who knew no hope,
Has not yet come wavering home.

SUMMER EVENING

The sunset has left in shadow
The white of the birch-wood's breast;
But a silver moon is rising
And gleams towards the far-off West.

Calm lies on firth and inlet
And the shore with its image blent;
But the peering moon is pointing
To the Western continent.

The nightingale, distressful,
Laments in yonder copse,
As a tiny sheepbell tinkles
While the wether strays and crops.

An owl in an oak is crouching,
Her eyes for the hunt a-glow,
And she stares at a thoughtless rabbit
That is hopping about below.

No leaf on a twig is stirring
 In the silence beneath the moon,
 But a windy sky to westward
 Gives promise of freshening soon.

This evening my peaceful spirit
 Is free from all care or fright;
 And yet, if the wind should freshen,
 I sail on my way ere night.

SIGURÐUR JÚLIUS JÓHANNESSON (born 1868)—

Son of an Icelandic fisherman, born at Lækur, Iceland. Graduated B.A., 1897, and Cand. Phil., 1898, from the College of Reykjavík. Emigrated to America, 1899, and in 1907 took his medical degree from the National Medical University, Chicago. A practising physician in Western Canada since 1908. Married Halldóra Fjelsted in 1905 and has two daughters. Has published many short stories and has translated into Icelandic books by Bellamy, Gunter, and Björnson. His poetry is found chiefly in *Tales and Poems* (2 vols., Winnipeg, 1900 and 1903, pp. 180), *Twigs* (Reykjavík, 1910, pp. 262), and *Sunshine* (Reykjavík, 1930, pp. 60). Excels in verse for children.

WHAT ART THOU, LIFE?

What art thou, life?

A billow that rises and surges
 Riven through surf of flesh in the gulf of time,
 Onward and upward forever, as ever urges
 A procreant power, eternal and sublime?
 What art thou?

What art thou, life?

A bubble that sinks and disperses,
 Borne from a wailing cycle the years devour,
 Where drowning spirit expires with bubbling curses?
 Art thou the dying dream of a giant power?
 What art thou?

TO A MOUSE IN A TRAP

Cowering and a prisoner,
Furry little beast,
How your mind is frantic,
Check'd your happy feast!

Life a bridge of terrors
Is for me and you;
You may think me larger,
Yet I'm little too.

Do not joy and sorrow
Meet us both alike?
Common laws of living
Through our pulses strike?

Sure the self-same essence
Each his breath supplies;
The same eternal spirit
Peeps out through your eyes.

To my heart's affection
My own home is best;
Dear to you, my mousie,
Is your own wee nest.

Though my strength far higher
In the scale may mount,
Does no gift of mousehood
Balance the account?

At your grief and panic
All my passions fall;
I must call you sister,
Spare you after all.

MAGNÚS MARKÚSSON (born 1868)—

Born in Skagafjörð, Iceland, of farming stock. Received an elementary school education. Twice married, in 1883 and 1890, and has eight children. Came to Can-

ada in 1886, and settled in Winnipeg. Began as a laborer, but has spent nearly forty years in real estate and insurance, interrupted in 1906 by a brief interlude in Iceland as a Canadian immigration agent. A prominent athlete in youth. Has published two volumes of verse: *Poetry* (Winnipeg, 1907, pp. 128), and *Fragments of Melody* (Winnipeg, 1924, pp. 270).

THE BIRCH-TREE

I gazed upon a silent grove
Where gloomy autumn shadows strove,
And marked a blenched and trembling birch,
Once bold and gay in summer's search
For happiness, but haggard now
With hoar, dead leaves on many a bough.

It sorrowed for the summertime's
Lost sun, and dew, and merry rhymes,
For all its blossoms, bleak and pale,
Long blasted by the frosty gale.
In sere and solitary pain
It seemed to mourn for June again.

In autumn's dark and eerie dearth,
I dully gazed upon the earth;
And found my own grey-headed fate
A fellow to that birch-tree's state.
So passed I pensive to my room
That pallid evening in the gloom.

CHRISTMAS

Once more upon our holy joy earth sees
This Day dawn after nineteen centuries,
And, as of old, beholds its peaceful light,
Blest in all ages, ever new and bright.

Now at the Saviour's footstool we express
For all His love our happy thankfulness,
As if His coming to reveal our Road
Were for each child a Christmas-gift from God.

SPRING

I find my spirit young once more
With ardent cheer;
I feed upon refreshing store,
For spring is here.
I view again the vernal flowers
Of my own youth,
When love and life through tuneful hours
Were blent in truth.

I hear the gentle pulse of hope
In sweet refrain
To see the eyes of nature ope
To life again.
She who has suffer'd winter's night
Now weaves a crown,
Walking the upward path of light
Nor looking down.

O Spring, in grace of flower and leaf
And happy tune,
The season of our gloom and grief
Thou dost impugn.
Of our Redeemer dost thou sing,
And by thy glee
I find within thy heart, O Spring,
Eternity.

O gentle Spring, thou art become
My utter trust;
Life's autumn cannot chill me dumb
If thou art just.
And when my last dark hours expire
And I depart,
I'll calm the tumult of my lyre
Against thy heart.

GÍSLI JÓNSSON (born 1876)—

Born at Háreksstaður, Iceland, of farming stock. Graduated 1896 from Möðruvalla school, Iceland. Married Guðrún H. Finnsdóttir and has four children. Came to Canada in 1903. A printer by trade. Has published one volume of poetry, *Birds of Passage* (Winnipeg, 1919, pp. 244). The poem "Good Night" was written soon after he had migrated to Canada, leaving a young son temporarily behind him in Iceland.

GOOD-NIGHT

The ample earth now slumbers slow,
But heaven smiles with starry glow,
The drooping flower dons its hood,
The zephyr croons in accents low,
The thrushes whisper in the wood:
Good-night!

Beyond the firth, in broader lands,
I know a little homestead stands
Where craggy peaks assail the stars.
And there, while cattle graze its strands,
A river roars by sandy bars:
Good-night!

Beneath the thatch, a little boy
Lies deep in dreams of daring joy,
And does not hear the torrent cold.
From cloudless skies the spring-winds coy
Are whispering as his dreams unfold:
Good-night!

TOAST TO CANADA

Land with forests like the ocean, shoreless prairies, giant
hills,—
Every prince of song has praised thee, high in verse that
warms and thrills.
Therefore I, who lack their stature, thinking on their
towering state,
Stammer and hesitate.

Fain would I, throughout the nations, vaunt thy glory in
my song,
But oblations of thanksgiving flow more freely from my
tongue:
After five and twenty summers, foster-love thou didst
impart
Throbs in my inmost heart.

On thy breast our sires found shelter, friends and babes
that hither trod;
Sea-deep tears of joy and sorrow sank into thy kindly sod.
Up from mists of human life, the tree of fair remembrance
grew—

A sacred sign and true.

Land thou art of youth and power; winds that may the
freeman rear

Blow from off thy far-flung prairies, potent with the
growing year.

O'er thy sweep of boundless champaign, where the far
horizon gleams,

Widens a world of dreams.

All earth's races live as one in thy domain through peaceful
days,

Fused to unity of spirit in the fervor of thy praise.

Built on concord, see a nation, as the ages run, arise,
Valiant, and skilled, and wise.

Land of beauty, land of sunshine, land by birth of children
blest,

Laud and honour shall extol thee from remotest east and
west;

While our hearts, outstripping metre, herald eminence for
thee

Farther than eye can see.

GUTTORMUR J. GUTTORMSSON (born 1878)—

Born at Icelandic River, near Riverton, Manitoba.
Educated in Manitoba elementary schools. Married Jensina Danielsson in 1904, and has six children. A farmer

in the lake district of Manitoba. His chief hobby is organizing and conducting rural orchestras. He has published one volume of drama, *Ten Plays* (Reykjavik, 1930, pp. 238), and three of poetry: *John from the Eastfords* (Winnipeg, 1909, pp. 82), *The Farmer's Daughter* (Winnipeg, 1920, pp. 92), and *Jest and Earnest* (Winnipeg, 1930, pp. 190).

THE CARE OF THE BEES

Honey-bees of my high ideals
Have I imprison'd in this my winter,
Night and day in the chilling darkness
Down in the cellar beneath my spirit.

Honey had grown too hard to gather.
Ghastly and pallid, the flow'rs had wither'd;
Burdensome snowdrifts had bent them under;
Blizzards lay deep on my fields and orchard.

Honey-bees of my high ideals
Had to wait for my life's warm summer.
Freely they'd rouse at the first spring sunshine,
Fly from the cellar beneath my spirit.

Then they would cling to the fragrant clover,
Clammy cells of exceeding sweetness,
Harvesting honey of praise and honour,
Happy in breezes of golden springtime.

Spring came at last, but the lingering winter
Levell'd its snows on the frozen farmlands.
Ere the fields were ploughed and planted,
Pinching hunger assailed their vitals.

Time went by, and I raised the trap-door,
Took to the ladder and sought the cellar.
Stygian voices I heard distinctly
Stir in the subterranean darkness.

Savage hunger and sullen rancour
Sang in the clouds of that dim inferno;
Borne from the depths like a blast of brimstone
Buzz'd the rage of their venomous cursing.

Bees that were pang'd to the point of murder
Prick'd at my flesh in the soul's deep shadows;
Stabb'd me in rage and install'd their poison;
Stung, I screamed like a wolf half-scalded.

Scars are my due till my day is over,
Deep-sunk eyes and a throat all swollen.
Loathesome I feel in my mutilation,
Less like a man than a fallen angel.

A DREAM

I dreamt that I heard from on high
The beating of effortless wings
Like the echoes that unwritten verse
Through a lone worker's consciousness flings.

I sought far and wide through the blue
In the gleams that visions belong,
And I saw on the path of the sun
The wing'd horse of unperishing song.

The dream was too fair to be false,
There was truth in its radiant charm;
And I tethered great Pegasus fast
In a cow-shed down here on the farm.

THE INDIAN FESTIVAL

The shore with bark-canoes is lined,
A gleam of white along the sands;
High in a grassy glade behind,
A cluster of bark-teepees stands.
On elk-skin thongs from stake to stake
Thin hanks of frying meat are strewn,
That in the autumn twilight make
Dark stains across the rising moon.

The fires crackle, leap or smoke;
The wind brings stench of carrion frying;
While snarling huskies gnaw and choke
On naked bones, in plenty lying.

Papooses wail from hanging cots;
The men put on their feathered crests;
And women bind the beaded knots
Of fillets on their brows and breasts.

For now in maddened festival
The savage woodland tribes consort,
With laughter like a waterfall
And all the tricks of wanton sport.
Sudden a storm of frenzy comes;
No law restrains the yelling throngs;
Wild clamor of the deer-skin drums
Beats loudly to their frantic songs.

Many are dancing. In the woods
The rest perform wild rites of bliss.
They laugh and shake their feather'd hoods;
They puff their cheeks out, bray and hiss;
Until at last the flagging dance
Turns to a feast in hungry mood:
Half-naked from their reeling trance,
They squat to gorge on grimy food.

Such are our Indians: tatter'd wrecks,
In exile from life's busy strand;
Held in this limbo by law's checks
That will not let them roam the land—
Land, where their fathers used to play,
Land, that is theirs no longer now,
Land, which at best they may survey
With silent grief and gloomy brow.

A roasting-stake above the fire
Is bending, spitted through a cur
(Shot with an arrow when desire
For dinner smote the reveller).
Low on their haunches they devour
The reeking fragments, loath to wait;
This white dog over which they glower
Stands for the White man, whom they hate.

SNOWDRIFTS

Over blinding plains of snow
North winds sweep and smother;
Here they lay a snow-heap low,
There they raise another.

Borne on cloudy bridges high,
Blizzard-hosts are shrieking.
Swirling snowflakes eddy by
In Protean streaking.

Flung together, tossed and spread,
Snow-wreaths drift and glare,—
Winter from her frozen head
Combs her falling hair.

Crystal breakers rise and fall,
Ever ebbing, flowing;
All are merged in one vast pall
Ere the gale cease blowing.

In that play of frenzied storm
All things suffer change:
Lofty crests grow uniform,
Hollows filled and strange.

ÞORSTEINN Þ. ÞORSTEINSSON (born 1879)—

Born, November 11, 1879, at Uppsälir in Svarfaðardalur, Iceland. His father was a carpenter and a farmer. Educated at Hólar school. Came to Canada in 1901, and has since lived in Winnipeg. Painter, and editor of the semi-annual magazine "Saga". Has married (1) Rannveig Jónsdóttir, (2) Guðmunda Haraldsdóttir. Two children. Hobbies: drawing, picture-painting, and stamp-collecting. Has published two volumes of poetry: (1) *Strands* (Winnipeg, 1918); and (2) *Home Thoughts* (Reykjavík, 1921).

TO VILHJÁLMUR STEFÁNSSON

I sing not the song of the Arctic,
For I know not the frontiers of cold;
Nor can I divine them by magic
As the sorceress sang them of old.
So be thou, Vilhjálmur, my poem;
Let thy life and thy deeds be my care;
For thine is the notablest epos
That Iceland and Canada share.

We might search through the scrolls of tradition, |||
Did it profit, for pattern to scan
For the manhood that crowns all endeavour
In the son of a maid or a man.
We love the fair lad whom adventure
Leads eager through peril and toil,
And we honour the dream of thy sire
As he broke the New Icelandic soil.

Thou wert born in Canadian forests
In the simple log-hut of the north;
No prophet foretold thy achievements
That day when thy mother brought forth
A lad who should dream of adventure
With the pride of the past in his face—
A wandering scion of Thorfinn,
A world-famous son of our race.

As a boy, to the lure of the hunter
Thou didst leap like a Viking to ship,
Thy strength, luck and health all devoted
Like Odd of Hrafnista to trip
With a fair wind to find for the wishing
And three magic arrows that sped
To their mark and returned to the quiver:
Such dreams o'er thy boyhood were spread.

Thou hast sought the cold world of the giants,
Thou hast dwelt with the ogres of snow;
With the Norns of the rock and the ice-peak
Thou hast borne thyself bravely I trow.

Through the vast, darken'd outposts of Winter,
With the heart of thy fathers of yore
Thou hast press'd on to glorious conquest
And a saga more splendid than Thor.

O'er white wastes of the northernmost ocean
Thou hast pierc'd to the outermost strand,
As glad in those harbors of horror
As was Leif when he sought out this land.
There thy soul in its ardor prophetic
Saw cities that yet shall arise
To give praise to thy name and thy prowess
In regions first seen by thine eyes.

From the veins of the glitt'ring Aurora
Thou hast mined the bright treasure of thought,
Rare gold for the storehouse of science
As thy peers through the ages have taught.
Like the Lights of the North, you illumine
The dark hyperborean Way
That the nations will know of to-morrow,
But no one knew yesterday.

Though the world is the heir of thy knowledge,
And this Land of the West owns thy fame,
The island that nourished thy forebears
Is prouder than all of thy name.
Each heart that pays homage to Iceland
Proclaims this warm wish for thee here:
That thine age may march onward in triumph,
More glad with each widening year!

CANADA

I think of her as once she freely went
With breast of naked marble, bronzed and warm,
And all the offspring of that virgin form
Had bow and arrow, plumes, canoe, and tent.
But commerce came with iron government
Such scenes with settled tillage to transform,
To trap with fettering tax the human swarm,
And spoil the land with hasty ravishment.

But now she is the Country of Mankind,
Where Red and White in common tasks engage,
Even in my Icelandic heart enshrined,
A fold where wandering sheep gain pasturage.
Here, where my love can build and burial find,
Shall be for me a cherished heritage.

EINAR P. JÓNSSON (born 1881)—

Born of farming stock at Háreksstaður, in the north-west of Iceland. Educated at the College of Reykjavik. Migrated to Canada in 1913. Associate Editor of *Lögberg*, Winnipeg, in 1916, and Editor-in-chief since 1927. One volume of poetry, *Songs of the Wilderness* (Winnipeg, 1915), and much fugitive verse of high quality.

THE CLOSE OF SUMMER

Funeral tollings are heard to-day,
Murmuring coldly through woods a-sway,
Swept by the winds of ocean.
The skies in the mourning of grief are drest,
All haggard and wan with a wild unrest
And a heavy heart's commotion.

The beacons of summer are burning out,—
Flaming birches are put to rout
In the waves of the wind's deep thunder.
Its organ-tones of autumnal Doom
Announce the coming of frost and gloom
To trample the pale leaves under.

Sorrowing ever, the human race,
That seek in vain for a resting-place,
Waver in that pale hour;
Their eyes are glassy with doubt that grieves,
And they read their fate in the yellow leaves
That fall in a drifting shower.

All things pass with expiring breath,
Songs of the future and songs of death
Blend in the doomsday weather;
The strange, vast drift of the autumn sky,
The sighing plains, and the hill-tops high,
And the dead trees, march together.

Over that ruin the storm-clouds sweep;
But seeds of summer lie safe and deep
That a far-off day may love them.
Dark and barren are glade and tree;
But the mould of the earth hides flow'rs-to-be,
Though the cold winds rave above them.

Sickles gleam in the pallid grass,—
Through heaven and earth two forces pass
That blend in the stream of fate:
Autumn's assertion of death and cold,
And faith that summer will come as of old—
The dream that our hearts await.

WINTER

I find thee a witch of the wastes, revealing
The wonder of snow-white ways;
The wind-swept wave, to thy music reeling,
Chants woe in a wild, chill phrase,
But wakes in the innermost weirs of feeling
The warmth of the summer's days.

Thou layest on land and lakes and flowers
The lightest of cerements warm;
The lingering lilt of thy harp-string showers
Its lays in a frost-sweet swarm,
And laughs in love as its gay strain dowers
The litany of the storm.

Capital sport we caught together
As comrades in that far land;
I claimed from the clasp of thy coldest weather
The kindling my veins demand;
And clapped as thou cast like a waving feather
A claymore in either hand.

Many, O Winter, have wished thee dying—
The weak are thy foes at heart;
They watch without wit thy runes, espying
No worth where thy frost-blooms start
Or in holy wonder of work defying
The world in its high, white art.

Though thou speakest oft with spasms of ire,
Thy spirit beneath is sweet;
Thy spitefullest tempests can yet suspire
Suspensions of summer's heat;
And I spy in thy breast as I spell in fire
A speech where God's pulses beat.

AT MY MOTHER'S GRAVE

(In Brookside Cemetery, near Winnipeg)

Here, by my mother's grave, the dusk is still.
Vague shapes are calling from the deeps of thought.
And holy dewes are falling, slow and chill,
Upon the silent hillock I have sought.

The living and the dead alike may dream
Here in the graveyard in the failing light;
By the dim bourne of silence, earth may seem
To riper minds a thing of nobler sight.

White headstones, carved with Viking characters,
In glimmering rows across the darkening plain
Are guarding still the spirit that was hers—
Our mother-land of saga o'er the main.

The tears that joy may shed, or sorrow cast,
Flow to the self-same sea when all is over;
And every soul must slumber here at last
Beneath the prairie rose and four-leafed clover.

Short is the space between our dawn and dark.
Pale lightning cleaves the night-clouds in the west.
One sombre thought is lighted by that spark:
A tired son must shortly turn to rest.

Now in the silent night the rain is weeping
Here where my songs' dear inspiration lies;
And here amid the dust of races sleeping
The deepest roots of memory take their rise.

JAKOBÍNA JOHNSON (born 1883)—

Born at Hólmavað, Iceland, daughter of Sigurbjörn Jóhannsson, farmer and poet, and María Jónsdóttir. When she was a child of six, her parents settled in Argyle, Manitoba, and she received all her early training in the Canadian West. Became a school-teacher. The author not only of much very fine original verse but of many verse translations from Icelandic into English. Married Ísak Jónsson, brother of Gísli Jónsson and of Einar P. Jónsson (qq.v.). Now resident in Seattle. In the summer of 1935, she went by invitation to Iceland as the guest of the Icelandic Government.

THE SPARROW

The winter wind had abated
And the first spring flower smiled,
When a gentle sparrow hail'd me
And chirp'd in a query mild:
"Could a tenant have your bird-house,
So tiny and neatly styled?"

I knew what he ask'd, and I answer'd:
"Yes, welcome, my little cock!
The house has been made to serve you,
The pride of your feather'd flock,
So hunt up your little lady
And show her around the block."

Then he hastened away in pleasure
And sought out his small grey Sue.
They went through each nook and corner,
And squabbled, as humans do;
She was so clean and fastidious,
But agreed to keep house for two.

Then happy they flew together
To seek for the first bright straw,
Flitting with twigs and feathers,
Busy with beak and claw;
When their neighbors tried to approach them
They chased them and sought the law.

But at last came days of glory
With peace as of heaven fraught,
My cock-sparrow stood on his doorstep
As proud as a husband ought,
And sang of the hours of rapture
That the sun and the spring had brought.

Though spring in its arms enfolds us,
Its hour is not for long;
We turn from that peaceful slumber
As the claims of the year grow strong,
And we find in our human summer
A gold that is more than song.

So was it then with my sparrow,
Whose joys were put to rout,
For I miss'd his singing's rapture
One day, and looking out
Beheld him a busy father
With little ones all about.

But faith in life's high purpose
And faithfulness in one's role
Are a bond that binds together
A family in one whole;
And though we may sing no longer,
There's a guerdon within the soul.

In autumn when leaves are falling
And winter grows harsh with pain,
And songsters departing to southward
Assemble by field and plain,
Then the living wealth of the sparrow
Is a theme for a new refrain.

TOAST TO ARGYLE, MANITOBA

On a beautiful June morning, fair district of my heart,
'Tis my rapture to remember you in song.
Enthroned 'mid garden flowers, you play a queenly part,
And many rare delights to you belong.

In the fulness of your verdure, there's not a faded leaf,
Fair promise to each field its wealth will bring;
While the glory of red lilies surpasses all belief
And the harebells are rejoicing in the spring.

Here prairie trails attract us, but lo, a wave is nigh,
A lake in yonder hollow bars our way;
Within that fringe of woodland, a little brook runs by
Where the children of the school are wont to play.

I render friendly greeting to every hill and dale;
I range your fields, but no one sees my track;
Unfriended as the sun himself, my thought takes up the
trail,

And longs, in this sweet springtime, to be back.

With far prophetic vision, the faithful pioneers
Beheld the peace and plenty that are yours;
And gladly they remember with the lapsing of the years
Devotion to a work that still endures.

For what are wealth and beauty when matched with such
a task,

Such nobility and faithfulness in toil?

It shines out to the ages like a beacon, and I ask
God's grace on my remembrance of your soil!

JÓHANNES H. HÚNFJÖRÐ (born 1884)—

Born of farming stock at Stóradal, Húnavatnssýsla, Iceland. Came to Canada as a lad of 16. Is a farm labourer, and unmarried. Numerous fugitive poems in the Icelandic press.

THE CONSCOMB

With dainty foot he struts upon the stage,
 A vision of conceit from head to toe;
 He bows and ~~titters~~ waits, waiting to engage.
 (The people into gales of laughter go.)

In posturings to ape an orator,
 He paws the air, and clasps his pudgy hands;
 He minces to and fro across the floor.
 (The audience in ecstasy expands.)

He swells as if his paunch were full of wind;
 His chin wags like an old weak-witted wether,
 Till by his bleating nonsense, unchagrined,
 He shows himself a numskull altogether.

Lucky for him (and us) that then there came
 No foolish praise to tickle his long ears,—
 Or else his mutton-headed pride would claim
 Triumphal columns lasting down the years!

SVEINN EIRÍKSSON BJÖRNSSON (born 1885)—

Born on a farm at Vopnafjörð, Iceland. Came to Canada at the age of 19. Graduated in medicine, 1916, from the University of Manitoba. Married Maria Laxdal, 1916, and has four children. Physician, practising in Arborg, Manitoba. A prominent chess-player. Fugitive verse in Icelandic newspapers.

OUTLOOK

If you have scal'd the headland
 And come to the topmost crest,
 Ever the outlook grows fairer,
 Each image more gracious and blest.

For the kernel of life everlasting
 On the topmost heights must be;
 Each leaf there is turn'd to a poem,
 Each stream and the earth and the sea.

A world of mysterious power
Is heaven within our soul.
We hear the cataracts falling
In the ocean's broad, blue bowl.

Each fall is divine intuition,
A heart-beat of life to-day;
Each note in the whole perception
Is fus'd in the cosmic sway.

That union with spirit eternal
Is speech that is dear beyond guess,—
In hearts that are pure and uplifted
A power to strengthen and bless.

Swedish-Canadian Poetry

Swedish immigration into Canada has taken place largely during the past forty years. Approximately 40,000 Canadians are of Swedish origin. Most of these have settled on the prairies. The chief centre of their literary expression has been the city of Winnipeg, where two weekly papers, "Svenska Canada Tidningen" and "Canada Posten" maintain a very high standard of literary excellence. Several volumes of verse have been printed in these newspaper establishments. The most important work is that of Arthur A. Anderson of Winnipeg, one of the most recent arrivals from Sweden, whose technical competence and range of cultivation are quite noteworthy. There is greater driving power, however, in the somewhat radical poetry of Gerhard Hilarius Silver, a farmer at Bergland in the Rainy River district. Genuine, though erratic, brilliance has been manifested by Sten Goerwell of Winnipeg, a cousin of the great though erratic Swedish poet Almqvist. Justus Linderholm is something of a nomadic hermit, with astonishing linguistic gifts and a deeply religious seriousness that manifests itself in most of his poetry. Gustav Stohle is a folk poet of considerable promise, who is now a fisherman off the B.C. coast. These five diverse types represent the best of the Swedish-Canadian contribution. While not in the same class with that of the Icelandic-Canadians, it is nevertheless important and interesting.

JUSTUS B. LINDERHOLM (born 1872)—

Born in Lindsborg, Kansas, of Swedish immigrant parents. Began his career as a Lutheran clergyman, but a radical and highly temperamental spirit soon led him out into a life of the most varied secular vicissitudes. Since coming to Canada, he has been employed chiefly in newspaper work in Winnipeg and Port Arthur. His chief literary activities have been in philology. His work on Indian languages and on Lappish have brought him an honorary membership in the Royal Swedish Academy. He speaks, reads, and writes all of the Scandinavian languages, as well as Finnish, German, French and English. Poetry has been only a lesser by-product of his life. His main interest are theological and linguistic. Now resident in Port Arthur, Ontario.

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

Am I the guardian of my brother's fate
Shall his sad weeping cause me sore debate?
Shall I be troubled by his sleepless nights,
His woes, his pain, the flouting of his rights?

Shall my laborious earnings be employed
To pay back what my brother's fault destroyed?
Shall I give all I own for his offence
Without the slightest hope of recompense?

The Master did so! Therefore go in haste
And learn the duties that our Lord embraced:
So shall your human love rise pure and free
And praise your Father's blest divinity.

Then grieve not for the sufferings of your flesh!
In God's good season you will gain afresh
A hundredfold in harvest at His throne
For every deed of kindness you have sown.

WHAT YOU OUGHT NOT TO BE

Be not too wise, my trusty friend,
For wisdom often breeds its loss,
While foolish men may not offend
If kindly acts their folly gloss.
But if your rights you still exalt
And spend your time in finding fault,
Mankind will tear your claims across.

Be not too greedy, when success
Is tumbling pennies in your purse!
For Mammon's slave, though people bless,
His own dark fate will surely curse.
For selfish luck is brief and mean
And fades away in death unclean,
Like rose-buds that foul grubs coerce.

Be not too weak, if Fortune's wheel
Turns hard against your cherished plan.
Hold fast, nor at its onset reel!
Be firm and stoutly play the man!
Fortune will favour at the last
The strong man, but the weak will cast
Prone to the earth before his span.

Be not too cowardly, but rear
Your right hand in the war on ill;
For yonder, armed with sword and spear,
Lord Satan waits you, cruel and chill.
Lay on with arm of valiant trust!
And sin will yield before your thrust,
And God will stand beside you still.

GERHARD HILARIUS SILVER (born 1889)—

Born at Jarpen, Sweden, son of a laborer. Came to Canada in 1910, at the age of 21. Has spent most of the subsequent time as a pioneer farmer at Bergland, in the Rainy River district of Ontario, except for an interval in 1923-24, when he was editor in Winnipeg of the

Swedish Weekly, *Svenska Canada Tidningen*. Married, in 1916, Ellen N. Larson, and has nine children. Has published one volume of poetry, *In the Age of Wolves* (Winnipeg, 1918, pp. 40). His poetry voices a strong protest against the social injustices of our time.

MY SON

I

A sea of sunlight pours its golden tide
In through the window, and its surges run
About the room, where, mute and thoughtful-eyed,
I sit and gaze on this, my little son,
Sleeping in peace upon his trundle-bed.
Silent I watch the sunbeams, as in fun,
Play with his rosy cheeks and boyish head,
Sport through the yellow tangles of his hair
Or wanton at his half-shut eyes instead.
And still I gaze, unable to forbear . . .

II

An under-current of warm feelings glows
Within my heart; but sorrow mingles too
Its minor key with their adagios
As, tender with delight, my glances view
My son, thus caught in calm and peaceful sleep.
Uneasy musings soon beget a crew
Of crowding thoughts, whose batlike shadows sweep
Across the glory of that sunlit face.
How fortunate his childish heart to keep
No dark account as yet of earth's disgrace,
Knowing, through years of childish innocence,
No harm from the malevolent and base!
His boyish mind is spotless of offence,
Blest with the noble instincts of his years.

Alas, I wonder, will malevolence
Of this world's ruthless tongue call forth his tears
In days to come? Will powers of wrong control
His nobler nature with their lies and sneers,
Quenching the fire of love within his soul
And bringing moods of lacerating pain? . . .
Such are the dark forebodings of my brain . . .

III

And if new storms of war shall sweep the earth,
Lit from the sparks of this which flames to-day,
Destroying boundless wealth of human worth
That toiling centuries can ne'er repay,
Will he, in lust for action, leave my side?
Will all the noble ardours that now sway
His love for man be hideously denied?
Will his right hand in fratricidal strife
Add terror to red murder's rising tide
That day when he makes entry into life?
Oh, may this son of mine by grace be spared
From such mad scenes as in our times are rife,
When maniac crimes sheer glory are declared!
Grant rather, God, that the unblemished peace
Now resting on his face may still be shared
With all the years to come and never cease!
Grant that our world may yet be reconciled,
That flaming hate through love may quite decrease
And all the nations grow in friendship mild;
That every living creature shall aspire
Not to fight foully in a war defiled,
But to bring in the dreams of our desire,
Hallowing earth with peace that ne'er is done,
Saving mankind from a consuming fire
While universal streams of fortune run—
That day when manhood opens for my son.

ARTHUR ANTONIUS ANDERSON (born 1894)—

Born at Malmberget, Sweden, son of a miner. Educated at high school and school of forestry. Successively cashier, inspector, and manager of saw-mills in Sweden. Married, 1919, Maria Elizabeth Roos, and has two sons. Migrated to Canada in 1924, and is now partner in the Hermanson - Anderson Steamship Agencies, Winnipeg. Has published one considerable volume of poetry: *Dust* (Winnipeg, 1934, pp. 126).

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Deepening darkness now dims the horizon,
Cloak'd in the clustering clouds of the night;
Wild winter waves are at rest from their warring;
Mute are the mists over mansion and height.

Silent is speech at the set of December;
Dug is the grave for the dying Old Year.
Kindly Valkyries will call him to Asgard,
Stark from his strife, on a star-adorned bier.

It is a bell we hear, clanging and calling,
Strike through the silence's strangling constraint?
Was it a wassail from watchers in Asgard,
Sign of the sand in the glass running faint?

Norns of the verberant night are announcing
Solacing sounds to the sad and the poor.
Happiness, hope, and a hallowing plenty
Speak to the spirit of esperance sure.

* * *

Loki lies lurking in lairs of illusion,
Tricking the travellers lost in the dark:
"Mourn then no more; it is good to be merry."
Treacherous trolls laugh and echo him—hark!—

"Bend not your bow, brother! How does it help you?
Better the beaker of boisterous mead!
Dullards may dream of the days that come after.
Play in the present is pleasure indeed.

Strike on your harp-strings in strident abandon!
Laugh with the lads who are loud in their mirth!
Drink to your deeds in this day of endeavour!
Mortal, to-morrow you'll moulder in earth.

Why this endurance of danger and discord,
Fear of the foeman that raids o'er the deep?
Waste not your will in this wearying warfare!
Nature gives nectar and nights of soft sleep."

* * *

Bell-tones once more in the midnight make music,
 Soft as the zephyr when summer sighs low.
 Fair stands the Norn of the Future, a figure
 Holy and white in her garments of snow:

"Shame is the share of the shallow and selfish.
 Wine is the wish of the wavering fool.
 Bitter are ballads that runes of remembrance
 Carve for the coward whose courage is cool.

Present distress brings its prizes hereafter.
 True are the treasures we win by our toil.
 Dare to face danger! Undaunted you'll challenge
 Hosts out of hell in the heat of your broil.

Fend for the feeble and fight for the fallen;
 Hold out a hand that your brother may rise.
 Then shall the War-maidens waft you to heaven,
 High to that holiest realm of the skies."

* * *

Clamant bells call to us. Can you not hear them
 Strike through the silence's strangling constraint?
 Was it a wassail from watchers in Asgard,
 Sign of the sand in the glass running faint?

UTOPIA

There is on earth a march of many pilgrims,
 Of migrants from the land of moiling mills;
 With tired hands and pilgrim-staves they grapple
 The heavy sands across the desert hills.

They journey towards the far-off sunny mountains
 Surmounted by the temple-courts of light;
 But still the way is long, the goal is distant,
 And life's dim valley full of mist and night.

I saw them in the silent midnight watches,
 I see them when the noon-day sun bursts hot.
 And should you ask them if the journey prosper,
 They do not know; and so they answer not.

Utopia! Where lies that golden kingdom?
Is there no one to comfort those who seek?—
The only answer ringing through the darkness
Is echo's cruel voice from peak to peak.

And though the pilgrim-multitude increases,
The country of their dreaming draws not near;
The path still lies through selfish mists of darkness,
Up thorny steeps of hatred and of fear.

But light, perhaps, some day will rise and conquer;
The sun shine forth upon a fairer day;
And humankind, forgetting self in service,
Defy at last the dangers of the way.

STAR-EYES

Star-Eyes, most fair among maidens:
Tawny, and longed for, and good,
Slender in waist as a lily,
Eyed like dark pools in a wood,
Charming as June in its splendor,
Fair you are, Star-Eyes, and tender.

Star-Eyes, dear child of a chieftain,
Maid the Ojibways yearn after,
Soft through the realms of the forest
Ripples your echoing laughter.
Purity ever attends you,
Innocent dreaming defends you.

Star-Eyes, you lecherous trollop,
Dissolute slut of the street,
Here in the city's low gutter
Foulness to you has grown sweet.
Rakehells in quest of you sally,
Star-Eyes, poor bawd of the alley.

Star-Eyes, polluted and ravaged,
Slinks to the woods whence she came:
Bright glances sink to the earth now,
Broken and crushed in their shame.
Forests are haggard before her;
Star-Eyes falls groaning in horror.

STEN WIKTOR GOERWELL (born 1898)—

Born at Eskilstuna, Sweden, son of a sea-captain who was a cousin of the celebrated Swedish poet, Carl Jonas Ludvig Almqvist. Early training at Vasteras Gymnasium (science course). Came to Canada in 1920. Attended Brandon College (B.A., 1922, with gold medal in history), and Manitoba Law School, Winnipeg (LL.B., with honours, 1927). Barrister by profession. Married Nance Margaret Sundin in 1926. Has published one volume of poetry, *A Time of Breaking* (Winnipeg, 1922, pp. 97), and a treatise on politics, *Liberalism and the Future* (Winnipeg, 1931, pp. 203).

FIFTEEN CENTS IN MY POCKET

Fifteen cents in my pocket,
Here in this unknown land;
An emptied glass on the counter;
Fate in my own right hand!—
That can be call'd an existence
Free as the gull that flies
Gay from the outer ocean
To shores under unseen skies.

Limitless snowy prairies,
And a shack all frost and rime,—
There in the wintry silence
I'll celebrate Christmas-time:
Alone with my pain and sorrow,
Alone with my hopes and dreads,
And still in my heart the fragrance
The rose of remembrance sheds.

Surely to-morrow's trouble
Lies in the future still;
There will be time hereafter
To deal with to-morrow's ill.
If you have luck, enjoy it!
Drink till the draught be done!
Let neither cloud nor shadow
Blot out the shining sun!

Fifteen cents in my pocket,
Merriment in my heart,
A loving maid in remembrance,—
Grief is a world apart.
Soon shall the joys of Yuletide
Echo the wide world through;
Soon shall the peace of Christmas
Sit at my table too.

(St. Thomas, Ontario, December, 1920).

SALUTATION

To the Swedish Students at Brandon College
November 12, 1921

I greet you, my brothers and sisters from Sweden,
Who, banded like Vikings in vigor and truth,
Have sail'd from that far Scandinavian Eden
To dower this land with the sap of your youth,
Ingrafting the scions
Of clansmen like lions,
The strength of the pine and the lily's pure grace,
The heart that the Viking
By daring and striking
Has hardened to steel in the march of our race.

No stranger am I; for like you I was driven
By love of adventure to join in the ranks
Of those volunteers who have steadily striven
To plough back the frontiers, regardless of thanks,
In unsettled lands
With toil-callous'd hands,
With ponderous limbs and a spirit born free,—
A brain that surpasses,
And fair, loyal lasses
Who follow their lads where their labors may be.

To northward and southward, to east and to west,
By verdurous valley and hard-broken hill,
We hear the deep voices of Sweden attest

That faith in our heritage clings to us still.

All else we may pardon,

Our hearts ever harden

Against the false kinsman who fails to pay heed

And basely lets perish

The gift that we cherish,

Unmarr'd for the future, the mark of our breed.

Our race's tradition was shaped in the valleys

In Sweden where strong men have smithied their steel.

Have toppled down pine-trees and firs for their galleys,

And brought the white cataract under their heel.

Indignant, unfearing,

We gaze at the searing

Hot bolt of the storm-cloud that shatters our home;

But love-song and laughter

Full often come after

As glad in our youth through the moonlight we roam.

Each race has its culture, its genius, its merit.

We live as trustees in a far-away land

Of all that is precious from Sweden's proud spirit.

We guard it to share it. We hold out our hand:

Let Canada take us

As men; not remake us.

We're more than crude brawn; we've a brain and a heart.

In the glorious frame

Of Canadian fame

Let the children of Sweden contribute their part!

—GUSTAV STOHLE—

A Swedish-Canadian who has contributed considerable poetry of a popular character to the Swedish press in Winnipeg. Biographical data hard to come by, as he is busy working with a fishing gang on Rivers Inlet, B.C.

SEA SONG

I will leave all that's mean,
All that's drab and unclean,
Empty cant and pretensions untrue.
I will forth! I will flee
Where the wind wanders free
And the ocean lies boundless and blue.

From the house that is dank,
Dingy by-way and bank,
And the dirt of the coverts of men,
I will hasten to ride
On the blue, flowing tide
And shall know myself happy again.

For my life it shall be
On the surge of the sea
Where the storm-wind goes singing his song;
And at death I shall sleep
In the lap of the deep,
Where the bones of a sailor belong.

I TWANG'D ON THE LUTE-STRINGS

I twang'd on the lute-strings when I was a lad,
And caroll'd a jubilant ditty
Of luck and of love and of spring meadows clad
In sunlight and peonies pretty.

I twang'd on the lute-strings again yester-night,
And sang, full of grief, I remember,
Of dreams that were broken and hair that grew white
And leaves that must fade in September.

I have heard thus the voice of the tremulous strings
Proclaim the due close of my chaunting;
And I pass on the lute, and the notes that it flings,
To the young for their light-hearted vaunting.

Norwegian-Canadian Poetry

There are approximately 20,000 Canadians of Norwegian origin, but they have been diffused so widely that they have shown little corporate consciousness of their background of national culture. One weekly newspaper, the "Norrøna Canadian", published in Winnipeg, has given occasional space to fugitive verse, but otherwise I can find no record of poetic activity among them. The one name worth considering is that of Harald Bratvold.

HARALD BRATVOLD (born 1880)—

Born in Norway, son of an army sergeant-major. Educated in Norwegian high schools and commercial schools. Accountant, bank inspector, and auditor. Married in 1909, at Oslo, to Emma Constance Dyrendahl. Has two daughters, the younger of whom was junior tennis champion of Manitoba in 1933. He himself is an amateur athlete. The family came to Canada in 1927, and resides in Winnipeg.

LIGHT

He dreamed all the night and he brooded all day,
But his thoughts chased each other around in a ring,
Engaged in an ardent endeavour to weigh
The innermost meaning of everything.

"First know thou thyself," was his motto most fair;
"Discover the way of the just, and pursue it."
Then well might he laugh and be rid of all care,
Since he knew what was right and was ready to do it.

To know first himself was his evident wish.
To follow the right was the hope of his heart.
But one dark, fatal doubt made him feel like a fish—
He hadn't a notion just where he should start.

He wavered and swayed in the depths of his mind—
Though outwardly calm and serenely urbane—
But never a moment's relief could he find
For the ease of his soul in its puzzle of pain.

So one day he gave up. He relinquished the quest.
He left it unfinished, and labored no more.
"Thou, God, seest all things and knowest them best:
'Tis Thou who must help in my trouble so sore."

Then there suddenly came like a song on the air
Sung soft by a far-off invisible choir,
With odors of incense in ecstasies rare,
An answer to comfort his burning desire:

"Now first shalt thou triumph, O fool who didst think
To lift for thyself the dark veil of existence.
Now first shalt thou live, and in happiness drink
A draught all-immortal in mystic subsistence!"

Hungarian-Canadian Poetry

There are over 80,000 Hungarians in Canada, divided between the farms of Saskatchewan and the industrial towns of Ontario. Since the Treaty of Trianon placed about four million Hungarians as unhappy minorities in Yugoslavia, Roumania, and Czechoslovakia, the Hungarian migration to Canada in recent years has included a great many people of education and culture, and the influence of their poetry in Canada is noticeable. Thus the sensitive spirit of Rozsa Kovacs reacts in hurt indignation (see "Non-preferred", page 68) to the callousness of our immigration laws. The Muse of Julius Izsak, a pioneer farmer in Saskatchewan, is much more phlegmatic and pedestrian. In the work of Charlotte Petényi of Winnipeg one finds the gracefully expressed sentiment of a finer nature. Many others have written Hungarian verse in Canada, but these three are outstanding.

JULIUS IZSAK (born 1884)—

Born in Hungary, of peasant stock. Came to Canada with his parents at the age of 17, and homesteaded near Bekevar, Sask. Married in 1909 to Ida Gore, and has eight children. Since 1915, manager of a general store at Kipling, Sask. Has published one extensive volume of verse, *Prairie Flowers* (Plunkett, Sask., 1919, pp. 202).

AURORA BOREALIS

O Northern Dawn, thou fairy form of light,
Now rising proudly in the skies of night,
Through the majestic dark to leap and sway
With silent winds in ecstasies of play,

Thou art a timeless mystery of fire;
However much our questing eyes aspire,
The more we gaze upon thy loveliness
We comprehend thy hidden source the less.

Perhaps thou art the shadow of a world
Fairer than ours, which through the void has hurl'd
Thy glimmering image as a hope to earth
That yonder we may know a happier birth.

Thou art a symbol that we pass in vain,
Or else a pledge that we shall rise again!
Perhaps thou hidest from our mortal eyes
Some deathless Power that ever sanctifies.

Whether thou hidest Mystery, or Power,
I ever lift glad eyes up in that hour
When through the silent night thy wings are spread
And radiant glories from thy heart are shed.

Thou art a universe of joy and love
Still co-substantial with the Heaven above—
Symbol of the happier worlds beyond the sky
And shining pledge of immortality.

CHARLOTTE PETENYI—

Wife of Stephen Petenyi, Royal Hungarian Consul in Winnipeg. Mrs. Petenyi is a distinguished graduate of the University of Budapest, and has for many years been a valued member of the University Women's Club in Winnipeg. Her poetry, towards which she is somewhat apologetic, has a quiet academic grace of its own.

CHRISTMAS IN CANADA

Christmas, the scent of pines, God's angels nearer,
 Delight, by children's laughter made yet dearer . . .
 The heart's on fire, yet peace is in the face:
 Love, love to you upon this day of days!

The sky is painted with a wizard hue;
 Gently the evening gathers o'er the view;
 Then the Almighty says: "Let there be Night!"
 And darkness gathers every home from sight.

But, within doors, pale candle-lights we see:
 In every flame-flower shines eternity.
 Each heart, serene or sad, is caught at last
 In the warm spell by Christmas fires cast.

To me, as well, in spirit comes a star
 From Christmas days long lost in times afar.
 Out of the wreckage of those vanished years,
 True loves comes shining down upon my tears.

To-night my tongue is mute, but still the heart
 Pleads silently to play its ancient part,
 And wars with reason in desire to hold
 The love of long lost friends in days of old.

Fragrance of pine-tree and Yule-candles' beams
 Bring back my home and happy days, it seems;
 Love seeks to clasp them in such fond endeavour
 That I could gladly live with them forever.

But ah, my dear, our mutual love must seek
 A different Christmas in strange regions bleak,
 Here where the Arctic breezes rock our beds
 And men wear wreaths of frost-thorns on their heads.

Far is the shore beyond the foaming main
To which my homesick heart returns in vain;
And while I watch the prairie's distant rim,
My dream of Christmas trembles and grows dim.

But as I softly wipe away my tears
And turn to kiss your well-beloved face,
Life drives away my memories and fears;
Christmas, in this cold land, still holds its grace,
For love is with us, even in this place.

THE OLD AND THE NEW

When bells have tolled the passing of the year
And on my lips a midnight silence lies,
I brood on past and future with a tear,
And from my heavy heart sad prayers arise—
Grieving within the graveyard of the Past
Or staring at the Future's fields aghast.

The Old Year slowly turns to endless sleep;
His snowy beard with icy tears is wet;
The Young Year's hands now close the eyes that weep
And help the aged babbler to forget.
The dewy fingers of the babe still bind
The rainbow-threads with hidden issues twined.

Death casts a pall of snow upon the past;
And gazes on the present . . . What a land!
The trees are bare, the sun is overcast,
Crowns are of thorns, all hopes are crushed and banned,
Men sing of war, foul murder's emblems sneer
Life madly laughs, and yawning graves appear.

Oh, what a land! Through forests' tangled green,
In fog and flower fades the faltering road.
The New Year's brush now paints a sorcerer's scene,
With Sphinx-like face a hundred gates forebode.
Sad-eyed and merry o'er a darkling sea,
Lo, Death and Life both strive to come to me.

O Lord, Thou know'st the shore for which we grope;
 And if Thou guide, no evil shall befall.
 Grant then, O Lord, that we may greatly hope!
 Lend Thou, O Lord relief and peace to all!
 For hearts that ache let confidence be given,
 Let human faith soar flamelike up to heaven!

WHY?

Why have you looked into my eyes that weep?
 For I have said it is not good to gaze
 Within the tearful eddies of that deep.

Why do you seek to clasp my cold, white hand?
 For I have said no polar-rose should yearn
 To join the flowers of a tropic land.

Why would you smoothe my brow of its pale seams?
 For I have said it is not good to knock
 Upon the doorways of the world of dreams.

Why do you follow me as shadows haunt
 The shifting light; you ardent, hungry man?
 How should my grace help, if, despite your want,
 Our minds are sundered by an ocean's span?

ROZSA PALL KOVACS—

Wife of Rev. Francis Kovacs, minister of the Hungarian-Presbyterian Church in Hamilton, Ontario. Has published one volume of verse, *The Eternal Light* (Budapest, 1920, pp. 80). Expresses with peculiar poignancy the emotions of the newer immigrants.

"NON-PREFERRED"

Tears and blood cry out:
 In vain . . . in vain . . . in vain . . .
 The precious sweat we have sown
 Has brought us no harvest of thanks
 Created for us no new home.
 We are not wanted. Not wanted!

But yonder, far away . . . far away on the prairies . . .
The Northern Lights dawn on a new life.
Lay your wanderer's heart on the earth, O Magyar . . .
Do you not hear? "This land hopes for you.
Wants you. Loves you. Waits for you."

For you the primeval forests sigh and sob,
Like you in impulse, like you in their fate.
This is the exile's fate: to be driven by obscure impulse
To wander, strive, and fall.
This is the forest's fate: with murmuring boughs to breathe
The mystery of its growth; then burn, and fall unpitied,
That on its charred roots fair young towns may rise
And fresh exultant life may come and grow.

We are not wanted.
But the mine-shaft gapes for us.
Magyar muscles strain to the thud of the pick . . .
And there Satan lurks as we seek the vein,
Battering, cleaving, forcing open
In naked toil, in everlasting night,
The gates of infinite treasure.
All is for thee, young country.
In vain, reproachfully and coldly,
Thou turnest away thy face.

Thou art ours . . . and not a stranger.
Kind betimes and yet unkind,
Thou art our new dear mother
Who with gigantic sleepy nipple
Feedest us honey and gall.
We cling to thee ardently, obstinately,
With the hope of the exiled, the homeless, the distressed.
Thy hand may slap our faces, but we love thee, we love thee,
And with the grateful bleeding heart
Of our sad and colorful race
We shall raise new generations for thee!

WEST-BOUND

Forest, forest, forest . . .
Shaggy, and a-stir with life . . .

Mysterious . . . gloomy . . .
Slender pines—
Wave their scarves of silken-green;
And a million white-bodied birches
Open cool virgin arms.
Thickets . . . thickets . . . thickets
Impenetrably interwoven
Sway with a hundred leafy secrets.
All . . . all guard the future
Tenderly, jealously, warmly,
Like a woman's deep bosom
With its hundred nerves, its hundred veins.
Thus are shielded the future's plans,
Its towns, its factories,
And the million precious lives
Over which this boundless forest-ocean's
Living green is brooding to-day . . .
But they are coming . . . they are coming.

O wanderer, who on this swaying, roaring train
Hurriest through this murmuring sea of leaves,
Pour thy distressful sorrow into the past.
The root of the future is in you. Do you not feel it?
The blue sky's little sisters, these fair lakes,
Beckon to you. The earth offers wealth,
It lays bare naked treasures.

You . . . you are here the vein of life.
Do you not feel the wondrous fire of God
Run scalding in your brain, in your heart?
Do you not feel your unborn grandchildren
Straining with power in your breast
To create . . . to create . . . to create?

And already
There beckons colorfully to you
The green sea's first haven—
The island of promise
Flying the white standard of hope—
WINNIPEG.

Italian-Canadian Poetry

There are probably 40,000 Italians in Canada, resident mostly in the industrial cities and towns of the East, particularly in Montreal. It is significant that in that city there have been two Italian newspapers, the weekly "Araldo del Canada" and the semi-weekly "Italia", with a combined circulation of over 20,000 copies. Poetic expression has been rather lacking among them, however, and it has been found impossible to include any Italian-Canadian poet except the 60-year-old scholar Liborio Lattoni, a graduate from five great universities in law, literature, and theology, and now an evangelical clergyman in Montreal.

LIBORIO LATTONI (born 1874)—

Born at Urbisaglia, province of Macerata, Italy. A graduate in arts of the Universities of Florence and of Bologna; a graduate in theology of the University of Neufchatel; and a graduate in law of the Universities of Macerata and of Montreal. Married Ada Lombardi, of Florence, in 1907, and migrated to Canada in 1908. A minister of the United Church of Canada resident in Montreal. Has written a very imposing amount of Italian poetry in a wide range of metres.

MOUNT ROYAL
(Sapphics)

Silent through the firmament moves the white moon;
Lo, the night now reigns o'er the silent city.
Men and toil-worn creatures are deep in slumber
After their travail;

While a peace, mysterious, deep and solemn,
Spread across these plains where the great Saint Lawrence
Silent down its infinite ways and windings
Wanders forever.

Dimly seen, like a shadowy Titan rising
Black against heav'n's battlements, looms Mount Royal,
Solitary, there, in the murky vastness,
Darkly majestic.

What is its dream? Haply a mute nostalgia
Yearning comes for centuries past and vanished,
When, about it, Indian maidens chanted
Songs of soft beauty?

Then no city's deafening cries and clamor
Rose unlovely out of unlovely alleys;
Then no mists of mystery lay in squalor
Low in the ghetto.

Rather than in loneliness up the river
Came canoes, rare harbingers of the white man,
Cartier came, and courageous sons of Europe,
Dauntless explorers.

Does the Mountain dream of the famished growling
Long ago, when bears in the depth of winter
Smelt men's herds, and over these plains their hunger
Roared and re-echoed?

Earlier still, what eons of virgin silence,
Snows unbroken, deeper than ours and purer,
Where the sunshine, gleaming in golden splendor,
Shone like a vision?

Thus does it dream? Homesick for by-gone ages,
Yearns the Mountain there in the troubled shadows?
Does it pine in pain at our pale and sickly
Civilization?

Prophet-moods of infinite lamentation
Move across the face of the silent Mountain;
Far it gazes, gloomy as some Cassandra,
Fronting the future!

WINTER NIGHT

Outdoors, the howling wind is sibilant,
Shaking the trees like gallows-skeletons
That rattle sinisterly
With desperate, low moanings.

And in the squalid silence of my room
The melancholy winter night descends.
I sit beside the fire,
Staring in meditation.

This heavy shadow that enfolds my heart
And shrouds the inmost powers of my being,
Gnawing my spirit's vitals—
Ah, will it never vanish?

This bitter midnight of the stricken soul,
Freezing the spirit as the frost the body,
Who will dispel it from me?
When will the sun return?

Outdoors, the howling wind is sibilant,
Shaking the trees; the squalid night of winter
Presses with cold relentless—
Yet do I trust in summer!

TIMAGAMI

Where jewell'd, rocky isles in endless lines
Are shining, dewy, unexplor'd and free,
Veil'd in a myriad of forest pines
Sleeps the rare beauty of Timagami.

Just so, amid the Aegean waves' caress,
Perhaps white Aphrodite slept one day
All fragrant in her naked loveliness
And crown'd with Attic roses where she lay.

The humble log-hewn cabins that we scan—
Rude habitations on the rugged shore—
Are yet the only evidence of man
Where Nature's majesties our lot out-soar.

Slow, gentle breezes soft about us lie;
The music of the ripples does not cease;
And from the perfum'd pines there breathes a sigh
That urges love and restfulness and peace.

Like happy dreams that move across the mind,
The swift canoes traverse the shining lake
And vanish into vistas far behind,
Lost like our visions when the dreamers wake.

* * *

Could I, brief pilgrim of the centuries,
But tarry with my books in this fair spot
And drink in all the joy of scenes like these
Mid isles of beauty, happy were my lot!

And here, at last, at some far summer's end,
Yielding my ebbing spirit to the kiss
Of the Great Infinite, I'd then commend
My body to this lake that brimm'd my bliss.

Greek-Canadian Poetry

There are only a few thousand Greeks in Canada, and these are chiefly in large cities like Montreal. A Greek weekly newspaper, "Estia", is now extinct because its constituency was too small to enable it to carry on. Under the circumstances, Greek-Canadian poetry has only one name to offer, that of George Vlassis of Winnipeg.

GEORGE DEMETRIOS VLASSIS (born 1894)—

Born at Corinth, Greece, son of a farmer. Attended the law school of the University of Athens. Came to Canada in April 1914, as secretary of the Greek Consulate in Montreal. Later turned to teaching as a profession and studied at the University of Manitoba (B.A., 1929), and the University of Wisconsin (M.A., 1931). Has published a volume of poetry, *Roses and Lilies*, (New York, 1925, pp. 62), and a book on pedagogy, *The Child in the Home and the School* (New York, 1934, pp. 254). Resides in Winnipeg.

LAC LONG

(Laurentian Hills, Quebec)

O lake, thou living fragment of my past,
My longing spirit often turns to thee
Upon the mirror of whose purity
The shining silver lamp of night was cast;
And there I seek for comfort from life's harms,
Watching once more the countless trees that strove
To clasp thy crystal beauty in their love,
Stretching their soft, innumerable arms.

The dim canoe has brought us to the shore.
—Ah, nights of beauty, radiant moons that shone!—
Yet come, dear girl, and let us try once more
To find in the few moments that remain
Some fragments of the dream that now is gone.
—Ah, lake most fair, for which I long in vain!

Ukrainian-Canadian Poetry

The Ukrainians form the fourth largest racial constituent in the polyglot population of Canada. Only the Anglo-Saxon, French, and German groups are numerically superior to them. Heavy Ukrainian immigration, chiefly into the sub-Siberian prairies of the Canadian West, began about the beginning of this century; and to-day they number at least 250,000.

That such settlers would make any impact on the cultural life of Canada was not anticipated by the older racial communities. The tendency was to look down, contemptuously or condescendingly, on these newcomers, mostly of illiterate peasant stock, who divided their lives between the grinding penury of frontier pioneering and the heavy toil of the lumber-camp, the mine, and the railway construction-gang. More recently, grudging recognition has been given to their success in building up prosperous farms and villages, in breaking into the professions, and even in entering public life. The legal requirements of universal education have brought the second generation into Canadian schools, and ambition has led them on into creditable performances in the universities. The prospect of their speedy assimilation to the ways of the English-speaking majority is reassuring to the complacency of that dominant group.

Cultural activities of no mean order have, however, been developed by this quarter-million of Ukrainian-Canadians, and that mostly in the tradition of their own language and race. Unheeded by the Anglo-Canadian, they have tenaciously cultivated their handicrafts, music, ballet, drama, fiction, and poetry; for their leaders are firm in their resolution to preserve their legacy of national culture. There is, to be sure, little disposition to work for a Little Ukraine in Canada; any such political dreams of an *imperium in imperio* have long since been relinquished in favor of full participation in Canadian life; but they feel,

with perfect justice, that the traditions of English culture are only one version of the Occidental spirit and that their own nation has a distinct contribution to make.

However inarticulate the Ukrainians may have been on their arrival, they did not long remain so. Newspapers printed in Ukrainian sprang up, especially in Winnipeg, Saskatoon, and Edmonton and became—as they still remain—the chief medium through which the spirit of the Ukrainian-Canadian finds expression. Because of the relative poverty and paucity of their potential clientele, there are no Ukrainian book-publishers in Canada. Printed books are therefore a hazardous by-product of the newspaper plant, and have varied in numbers according to the estimated demands of the public. A bibliography of Ukrainian books written and published in Canada would run to several hundred titles; comprising, for the most part, fiction, theology, and books of reference (school-books, farriers' guides, farmers' manuals, and the like). Poetry in book form is relatively scanty. Many poets who, had they written in English, would easily have secured book publication by virtue of both quality and quantity, have begun and ended with the files of the Ukrainian newspaper. It is there that the great bulk of Ukrainian-Canadian poetry is to be found. A preliminary survey suggests that at least 10,000 Ukrainian poems lie embalmed in the back files of the newspapers of Western Canada. Most of this material is the saddest sort of doggerel; a further considerable quantity is tolerable, but not much more; while a precious remnant is eminently worthy of preservation both as poetry *per se* and as a moving record of the experiences and aspirations of the Ukrainians in Canada.

The Ukrainian poets of Canada fall into three main categories:

(1) The pioneer-poets of the pre-war period, who were educated in the Ukraine and published their poetry in Canada from 1900 to 1918.

(2) The post-war poets who were educated in the Ukraine.

(3) The post-war poets who have been educated in

Canada (and in the English language), but who are maintaining the use of Ukrainian in their poetry.

The pioneer generation first became vocal in 1911, when Theodore Fedik, a 38-year-old immigrant farmer, published his *Immigrant Songs* (Pisni Imigrantiv pro Stari i Novi-Kray) in the city of Winnipeg. This volume of 140 pages, written mostly by Fedik but with contributions from several lesser men, dealt simply but vividly with the hardships and embarrassments of life in a new land. The verse-form throughout is the simple "kolomyika" or trochaic ballad-measure of Ukrainian folk-poetry. It sets before us, with the humble directness of the Icelandic *rímur* or the Scotch ballads, the experiences of the immigrant: homesick but resolute; penniless but patient; hungry, despised, weary to the breaking-point, yet determined never to break. Fedik's *Immigrant Songs* had such well-merited popularity that the book was in its fourth edition by 1927 and has sold over 50,000 copies. So long as the Ukrainian language is spoken in Canada there is certain to be a steady demand for such a genuinely human document. Fedik is still alive, and has his home in the city of Winnipeg; but his poetic days are long since over. Labor and hardships have made him, at 60, a tottering, white-haired ancient, displaying in his manner something of the distinction of a retired general yet evidently a mere ghost of the poet of 1911.

Back at that time, his most important poetic contemporary was Vasil Kudrik, whose *Spring* (*Vesna*), a volume of 128 pages, was likewise published in Winnipeg in 1911. Kudrik shows a much wider range in both craftsmanship and subject-matter. Less than one-third of his book deals with immigrant experiences, told in Kolomyika-measure. In the rest of his volume, he roams through a variety of metres and over such miscellaneous themes as history, politics, criticism, dreams, friendship, and nature. One feels in Kudrik potentialities not fully realized. He falls just short of creating first-class poetry; yet the root of the matter is in him.

Still other poets of the pre-war generation were Joseph Yasenchuk, author of *The Canadian Kobzar* (Edmonton,

1918, pp. 64), Simeon Kowbel, better known as a playwright, Vasil K. Holovatsky, editor and part-author of a small volume of *Workers' Songs* (Winnipeg 1911), Dmitro Raragovsky, another contributor to the same work, and Paul Crath, now a clergyman in Toronto.

The second category (the post-war poets of Ukrainian upbringing) shows a greater proportion of intelligentsia as compared with the pre-war days. From 1900 to 1914, the Canadian government had brought in large groups of peasants to settle marginal lands. From 1919 on, the unhappy collapse of the Ukrainian nationalist movement led to an exodus of educated émigrés; and of these Canada received her share. They brought with them a greater measure of spiritual ferment, and a more self-conscious awareness of the Ukrainian attitude to the soil and to life. Many of this class have not yet adjusted themselves to the new country; some will never be able to do so; and it is a serious question whether the accident that such men write poetry in Canada really justifies their inclusion among Ukrainian-Canadian poets. Inasmuch, however, as many of them, through force of circumstances, are now farming Canadian soil and some are gradually ceasing to regard Canada as a very temporary boarding-house while awaiting a revolution in Eastern Europe, we may perhaps accept them here as incipient Canadians.

The chief names in this post-war generation are those of Petro Karmansky (now in Brazil), Ivan Kmetya-Efimovich, Volodimir Kupchenko, Michael Kumka, Katharine Nowosad, Joseph Sayek, Basil Toolevitro, and Taras Volohatuke.

Most interesting of all, however, is the group of young poets, educated in Canadian schools and universities, who consciously regard themselves as Canadians yet are deliberately seeking to create a Canadian literature in the Ukrainian language. Such writers are equally at home in English and in Ukrainian; they are widely read in the tradition of English poetry; but they do not wish to be mere literary step-children of that tradition. They feel that their spiritual roots are in the Ukrainian past and must remain unsevered if their poetry is to achieve suc-

cessful fruition; but they wish to engraft on their poetry whatever force or inspiration may be available in their new country.

The two most important members of this group are Ivan Danylchuk (born 1901) and Honoré Ewach (born 1900), two young alumni of the University of Saskatchewan who are now teachers in Saskatoon and in Winnipeg respectively. Danylchuk, in his first volume of poetry, *Day Dawns* (Winnipeg, 1929, pp. 55), sets forth his ideals in an illuminating preface:

"The Canadian prairies make golden a sea of wheat-ears; they sway in the breath of the wind and with their rippling they sing a new song. Where a few decades ago summer nourished countless herds of shaggy buffaloes, where the red-skinned Indians roamed, there to-day the wheat surges in golden waves, surges and whispers a new tale, waiting for the mighty singer who may understand it and exalt it in mighty song.

"The Canadian Walt Whitman has not yet arrived. The sound of the golden sea has entered into our hearts, bringing yearnings of supreme beauty and radiance. It incites us to sing, but it has not betrayed its secret, for it speaks the Indian language. The Ukrainian prairies gave us our souls, but the Canadian prairies have stirred us up to sing. These influences have united, and we do not grasp them: in the sound of the storm we hear tales of Hiawatha, and in dreams we see Zaporogian Perebynis. We sing, and our strange songs, in which we cannot match tones of equal force, are not wholly akin, either to the golden Canadian prairies which have reared and inspired us or to the Ukrainian prairies from which we derive our spiritual past.

"Thus the expression of our poetry has been shaped among the sounds of the prairie sea of wheat. It has been spontaneous and without encouragement. We have not been merged in the literature round about us. The sound of literary enterprises has poured in upon us from New York, Kiev, Copenhagen and Paris, but it has been mere sound and nothing more. We have been impelled by our own inner impulses to unravel the meaning of this land in which we live. Therefore we say to the capricious modern critics: Our reason tells us what the radios sing across the

Canadian prairies and what the farmers undertake with their Fordson tractors, but our hearts see only the glory of the golden sea.

"The Canadian prairies grow golden and wait for the arrival of the prairie Sandburg. We sing, and listen to see whether he be still far off."

There is a refreshing spontaneity about Danylchuk's verse. Although he is guilty of occasional flaws of over-sentimental fancy one feels that he possesses genuine poetic power and is steadily maturing in thought and utterance.

Honoré Ewach, who has been intimately associated with Danylchuk for many years, is at once more erudite and more mechanical in his poetry. He is easily the most learned of his group. He has published long philosophical poems, long verse-narratives on Ukrainian history, lyrics, short stories, critical essays, and a volume of verse-translations.

Other members of this newer poetic group are (i) Tetiana Kroitor, a young widow teaching school at Yorkton, Saskatchewan; (ii) S. W. Sawchuk, an associate of Danylchuk and Ewach at the University of Saskatchewan, and now a clergyman in Winnipeg; (iii) Peter Basil Chaykiwsky, a Manitoba school-teacher, now disabled; and (iv) Elias Kirjak, a school-teacher at Vilna, Alberta.

To some critics, the value of all this poetic activity may seem dubious. No poet of the first rank has yet emerged; and unless there are continual reinforcements of new immigrant stock, it is overwhelmingly probable that Ukrainian will have ceased to be written and spoken in Canada before another fifty years have gone by. Nevertheless, much of the verse already written does possess absolute poetic value and is thus self-justified. Had these poets elected to write in English, it is unlikely that they would have been worth reading. And finally, we have in this work a spontaneous, moving, and profoundly illuminating portrayal of the emotional and intellectual reactions involved in a great modern migration of peoples into the midst of a strange land and an alien culture. Centuries hence, Ukrainian-Canadian poetry will be treasured as a record of human experience.

THEODORE FEDIK (born 1873)—

Born in the Western Ukraine, of peasant stock. Elementary school education. Married at the age of 22, and came to Canada ten years later. One son. Worked as a common laborer, later as a store-keeper. Ukrainian Greek-Catholic. Began to write verse in 1909, and published in 1911 a notable volume of poetry, *Songs of the Old Land and the New* (Winnipeg, pp. 139). This book, although very simple and artless, is profoundly human in its appeal: it has passed through several editions and has sold over 50,000 copies. Mr. Fedik is resident in Winnipeg.

EASTER-BREAD

A wanderer here in Winnipeg,
I sadly celebrate
The first sweet Easter since I came
To find a migrant's fate.

All early on the "Sunday morn
The holy bells resound:
"Christ is arisen!" is their cry;
And still the word goes round.

But when I look for Easter-bread
My heart sinks down bereft;
For ah, they know not Easter-bread
As in the land I left.

This Canada, this "land of wealth",
Has lost one true delight;
The bread of rich and poor alike
Is all one ghastly white.

And so the poor folk cannot tell
Mere bread from Easter-bread.—
It was not so in that far land
Where sleep my father's dead.

VASYL KUDRIK (born 1875?)—

THE DREAM

Night . . . and in the south Diana,
Rising higher,
Touched the river's crystal levels
White with fire.

Silver radiance gemmed the tree-tops
More and more;
Half in light and half in shadow
Lay the shore.

Softly down the bedded garden
Slept the flowers;
Peaceful dreams upon us brooded
Through the hours.

Hearts that once were born to hatred
Against foes
Laid aside their bitter sickness,
Soothed their woes.

Still they dreamt of human welfare
Glad and free;
Loving, now, they pledged their foemen
Amity.

Trembling, fain to grasp that concord's
Joy supreme,
I awoke . . . and found its beauty
But a dream.

SIMEON KOWBEL (born 1877)—

Born of peasant stock, Borczow, Western Ukraine. Married in 1902, and has one son and three daughters. Came to Canada in 1909. Carpenter and building contractor. One of the most active playwrights among the Ukrainians in Canada. Has published two volumes of

plays, as well as numerous short stories and articles. His poetry is quite subsidiary to his drama. Resides in Winnipeg.

SONG OF THE ORPHAN

Can you see me, little star,
Shining up in heaven afar?
You are high above my need;
I on earth am sick indeed.

Yes, you see my tears that start,
Yes, you feel my breaking heart!
Suns have burnt you with their heat,
Moons have brought you healing sweet.

Tell me, if the tale is true:
Does God bless an orphan too?
Shining up in heaven afar
Tell me truly, little star!

PETRO KARMANSKY (born 1878)—

For some years after the War, Brandon, Manitoba, was the home of a distinguished literary émigré, much more eminent as a Ukrainian poet than any of the others included in this volume. Petro Karmansky was born at Ciszanow, in Galicia, and studied philosophy at Lemberg University and theology in Rome. Journalist, and later professor, in Lemberg. When the Russians invaded Galicia in 1914, he made his way to Vienna; was interned by the military authorities; but was soon released and employed in important secret missions to Italy and the United States. Settled in Brandon after the War, but migrated some years afterwards to Brazil, where he is editor of a Ukrainian newspaper in Prudentopolis. Has published six considerable volumes of poetry, the last of which, *For Honour and Freedom* (1923), is partly motivated by his sojourn in Canada. A man of wide culture in many languages. His poetry has been greatly influenced by Leopardi.

IN ROME

On vanished Caesars' cypresses
Imperial silence hung;
Across the dusk, a nightingale
From whispering cedars sung—
But sorrow claimed us for its own.

Deep lapped in evening twilight
The Coliseum lay,
And Hadrian's Mausoleum
Stood clothed in quiet gray—
But sorrow claimed us for its own.

With loud and liquid laughter
The leaping fountains played,
And graceful, shadowy branches
Upon the night air swayed—
But sorrow claimed us for its own.

On Tiber's tawny billows
A morning song rose high;
St. Peter's dome burned golden
Against a sapphire sky—
But sorrow claimed us for its own.

Proud citizens took umbrage
Because of our unrest,
But sorrow like a glacier
Lay heavy in our breast—
We knew our grief, and still were mute.

PAUL CHINGGERIE-CRATH (born 1882)—

Born in the Ukraine at Krasna Luka, where his father was principal of an agricultural college. Came to Canada in 1907. Was a radical in youth, but received theological training in the Presbyterian Theological College at Saskatoon, and became a Presbyterian minister. Married in 1914, and has three daughters. After several years of

ministry in Canada, he returned to Europe in 1924 and for the next decade was chief organizer of a Ukrainian Reformed Church in Eastern Galicia. Resident in Toronto, Ontario, since 1934. Published a volume of poetry, *For Land and Freedom*, in Winnipeg in 1914, as well as numerous political poems in *The Villager* (Lemberg), and *The Working People*, *The Red Flag*, and *The Censer* (Winnipeg), and religious poetry in *The Dawn* (Winnipeg) and *Faith and Knowledge* (Kolomyja, Poland).

SPRING ON THE PRAIRIE

The spring has vanquished winter now,
And put the frosts to rout;
It clothes the mighty plains with grass
And leads the flowers out.

Early the warm sun rises up
As tender as a wife
To wake the half-dead world again
And woo it back to life.

Now from the south come flocking fast
The feather'd guests once more
To spend the merry summer days
By lake and marsh and shore.

Blackbirds and killdeers, ducks and gulls,
Stir up a cheerful din,
The while the prairie farmer smiles
And drinks that music in.

With jocund heart he tends the plow
Across his pleasant farm,
Laying the furrows row on row
With strong and skilful arm.

The wind is singing at his ear,
With warm, unseen caress,
Of fertile days and harvests good
And peace and happiness,—

Of rapture when a golden sea
Of wheat shall flood the plain,
And all the granaries be filled
With swelling tides of grain.

Blow then, thou wind! Rejoice, O spring!
Shine forth, O glorious sun!
Throughout the prairies' vast expanse
March on, O song, march on!

CANADIAN ELEGY

Do you remember that cold night of autumn
When in the sky the pale aurora shone
As if it wove a tent of emerald sendal
Across the prairies with its radiance wan?
Do you remember how the stars of heaven
Glittered like livid jewels overhead;
And how the naked poplars in the north wind
Kept sighing of the summer that was dead?
Do you remember how upon my bosom
Clasp'd in a swoon of bitter grief you lay,
And how our hearts were agonized to question
The fate that bade me walk another way?
Do you remember? . . . Ah, but I remember
How that chill night grew empty and o'erthrown
When at the last you sought your bed, and slumber,
And left me in that prairie copse alone.
Something had gone forever from my spirit;
Pain filled its place with bitter loneliness;
A deeper darkness on the withered grasses
Sank in that hour of parting and distress.

Now over prairie trails the blizzard rages;
Snow covers deep the cot where once you dwelt;
The copse we loved, now mournful as an orphan,
Stands in a solitude that may be felt.
Yet when each spring the wind at last turns northward,
Ready to rouse once more the prairie year,
My grieving heart delivers to its keeping
A silent message for your silent ear.

VASYL TOOLIVETRO (born 1886)—

Born in the city of Nikopol, Russian Ukraine, and educated in the medical faculty of the Novorocysky University. Married in 1919, and has four daughters. Came to Canada in 1919 and has since been a laborer in metal-works at Hamilton, Ontario.

WINTER

O winter, winter,
Icy as duty,
Shining with moonlight's
Silver beauty,

Frost is thy nature
And snow thy delight,
Holy in whiteness
And fairer than light.

Life, at thy finger,
Lies cold on the clay:
Thou and Death carry
All creatures away.

Low in thy presence
Must ev'rything bow,
From thy displeasure
All hide themselves now.

Yet do I love thee,
Thou winter most pure,
Shining and holy,
Austere and secure.

All through my being
Thou powers pervade;
Thee do I worship
In love, unafraid.

PETER BASIL CHAYKIWSKY (born 1888)—

Born of peasant stock at Hryciwka, Eastern Galicia. Came to Canada as a lad of 9. Secured a Third Class Teachers' certificate in 1907, and taught school in Western Canada for a number of years, until incapacitated by a major accident. Now an invalid at St. Boniface Sanatorium, St. Vital, Manitoba. Has published one small volume, *A Cup of Coffee* (Winnipeg, 1932, pp. 32) and scores of fugitive poems in the Ukrainian press.

SPRING

Grim winter is already past;
The sullen ice and snow
From budding groves and greening fields
Have vanish'd long ago.

The golden dandelion hosts
In vernal dress display'd
Stand in the meadows, with their flags,
In myriad parade.

Thus Nature decks old Mother Earth
In flowers' apparelling;
And spreads a carpet soft with grass
To greet her daughter, Spring.

Hope floods the ancient veins of Earth
To hear the whisper'd word
That Spring is wakening at last
To joys too long deferr'd.

All through the cold December days
The Sleeping Beauty slept,
But now at last, in comely grace,
Forth from her place has stepp'd.

In Winter's rout all cares depart,
All heaviness and fear;
Grief spreads her wings and flies away
Because the Spring is here.

In sweet imperial pride she stands,
Unmoved by praise or threats,
Enrobed in lilies of the vale
And crown'd with violets.

Before the beauty of her brow
All Winter's power is spent;
Happy the man who by her side
Fears no impediment.

Happy is he whom Spring instructs
To sow what he may reap;
Happy is he who learns from her
An ancient faith to keep.

Happy is he who early plants
The grain of bread or truth;
For he shall harvest in due time
A blessed crop, in sooth.

JOSEPH YASENCHUK (born 1893)—

Born of peasant stock in Eastern Galicia. Eight years of schooling there. Came to Canada in 1911. Three years at Technical School in Edmonton. Enlisted in the C.E.F. Was arrested while at Salisbury Plains camp on charges laid by Russian enemies, but was honourably acquitted. Married in 1920, and has two sons and two daughters. General merchant in the town of Bellis, Alberta. Mayor in 1935, and a commissioner of oaths. Has won prizes through his hobby of woodcarving. Has published one volume of verse, *The Canadian Kobzar* (Edmonton, 1918, pp. 64).

THANKS TO MOTHER CANADA

O Canada, I give glad thanks to thee,
Thou light amid the darkness of my days,
A beacon of transcendent liberty
To guide me and my brothers in our ways!

Thou art to us a mother, and we greet
Thy justice with unbounded gratitude.
Even as Ukrayina dost thou treat
And shelter at this time her wandering brood.

I thank thee for thy motherly concern,
Thy even-handed justice toward the weak;
Yea, and my brethren thank thee in their turn
Because thy love receiveth those who seek.

We who are sons of Slavia, Cossack kin,
True children of the great Slavonic race,
Greet thee, and ask no better than to win
Beneath thy rule a calm and loyal place.

UKRAINIAN IMMIGRANT IN CANADA

He came from that far land where he was born,
To build a home for absent babes and wife;
And even upon ship his heart was torn
With dark forebodings of an unknown life.

Soon he obtained the longing of his soul:
An ample space of glebe extending wide.
And now thought he, my hopes approach their goal,
If only common health shall be supplied.

It was not so; a hundred forms of ill
Ravaged the golden dream of warm content;
Often he suffered hunger, pain, and chill,
Waiting in vain for wealth's accomplishment.

Often to grinding tasks he bent his back,
Or wet with tears the land where lay his seed,
Or trudged for forty miles the prairie track
To bring home flour to serve his daily need.

No town lay near; he had no horse at all;
And so that load his weary shoulders took . . .
Out of the past, O brother, we recall
Thy story far more brave than any book.

ELIAS KIRIAK (born 1893)—

Born of peasant stock at Zawale, district of Sniatyn, Western Ukraine. Came to Canada as a boy of 13. High school, and some undergraduate work at the University of Alberta. Has been teaching school since 1919. Has published a score of short stories and many scores of poems in the *Ukrainian Voice*, Winnipeg. Unmarried. Greek Orthodox. Resides at Vilna, Alberta.

THE CHINOOK

On wings of warmth thou comest rushing
 From rocky mountain headlong down;
 On slag of ice thou tramplest, crushing
 The iron frosts, the heavy snow,
 The rime that binds the plains below.
 At close of day or at the dawn
 They fear thy wasting frown.

Upon the czar of winter swooping
 From rocky mountain headlong down,
 Thou settest all his empire drooping
 With drenching rains that splash and pelt,
 With humid zephyrs, swift to melt;
 His boreal hosts of snow and ice
 In water thou dost drown.

On wings of speed thou comest singing
 From rocky mountains headlong down,
 Soft pleasure in thy progress bringing
 To beasts that prowl and birds that poise,
 And all-expectant girls and boys.
 Each heart in gratitude foresees
 The summer's leafy crown.

MICHAEL KUMKA (born 1893)—

Born of peasant stock in the Western Ukraine. Elementary school education. Came to Canada as a boy of 15. Has worked on railroads, in mines and forests, and on

the farm. At present a proof-reader for the *Ukrainian Voice*, Winnipeg. Married in 1925, and has two children. Has published three books in Ukrainian, viz.: *Beginnings of Gymnastics Among the Ukrainians of Winnipeg* (Winnipeg, 1925, pp. 32); *School Song Book* (Winnipeg, 1926, pp. 157); and *Best Puzzles and Plays for Old and Young* (Winnipeg, 1931, pp. 91). Fond of teaching young Ukrainian-Canadians gymnastics, choir-singing, and their mother-tongue. His poems are almost always brief humorous pieces.

HIS FATHER'S SON

A loving aunt surveyed the boy,
Her sister's little son,
And vowed that here his father's traits
Found echo, every one.

"He has his father's nose and eyes,
His features and his chin,
His cheeks, his forehead, and his hair,
His eyebrows, teeth, and skin."

"Even in things like finger-nails
His father's type runs true."—

—"These pants I'm wearing," quoth the boy,
"They come from father's too!"

HE GAVE ME SOMETHING

"Did you ask Andrew for some cash?"

—"I asked the stingy lout."

—"And then?"—"He gave me something, too."

—"Amazing! Out-and-out!"

"His conscience must be growing soft
Near Christmas . . . as it should.
But in the past all Andrew got
Was salted down for good."

"How much did the old skinflint give
In this strange burst of cheer?"

—"Two wicked wallops on the cheek;
"One wallop on the ear!"

THE MODEL SON

A gossip boasted to his friend

The virtues of his son:

"He doesn't smoke, or take a drink,
Or tease the girls for fun."

—"How old is this best lad alive?"

The friend in wonder cried.

—"The best of sons is just turned five,"
The beaming sire replied.

TARAS D. VOLOHATUKE (born 1898)—

Born of peasant stock at Cyhany, Galicia. Educated at high-school and theological seminary. Taught school. Came to Canada in 1923. Worked in lumber camps in British Columbia, on railway construction, and in seasonal farm labor. Ordained a Ukrainian Orthodox priest in 1926. Now working a farm, with only occasional preaching. Married Mary Mortietz, a Canadian-born Ukrainian girl, in 1926, and has two daughters, Yaroslava and Nadya. In addition to poetry, he has published a small volume of fiction and a one-act play. Now resident near Swan Plain, Saskatchewan.

THE PATRIOT

When in such patriots as this
You search for evidence of zeal,
You'll find by no analysis
True ardor for the country's weal.

Think not that aught but vanity
Is housed within his hollow head;
His efforts for our land, you'll see,
Are tenants of the tongue instead.

Each brave new path Utopian
To fairer worlds and sweet content
Will gain—no matter what the plan—
His unconditional assent.

To each superb new enterprise
He does not merely give his praise,
But claims, to prove his wits more wise,
He plann'd it, too, in former days.

In all good tasks he vows with vim
His readiness to help his neighbor—
But do not dare to ask from him
The least, small gift of wealth or labor!

S. W. SAWCHUK (born 1899?)—

NIGHT

Cometh the moon,
And silvers with its sheen the crest
Of the dark mountain; deep in rest
Earth lies a-swoon;
A windless calm the groves enfolds,
And silence like the grave now holds
The night's dim noon.

Man also sleeps;
Now after sorrow's anguish'd sting,
Sickness and toil and suffering,
None wakes or weeps;
For lo, the angel of the night
Above our homes with healing might
His vigil keeps.

SPRING

Spring is approaching with peace in her mien,
Bearing rare rapture on pinions of green;
Healing with magic of balsam most rare
Hearts that are sore with the woundings of care,
Spring comes serene.

Anthems of freedom resound o'er and o'er
Loud in the billows that beat on the shore;
Over the prairies green, billows of grass
Echo soft songs to the winds as they pass,
Songs loved of yore.

High in the blue of the heaven anon
Gleam the white clouds like the breast of a swan;
Misty blue skies kiss the earth and the flowers,
Luring our thoughts as they drift through the hours
Hither and yon.

KATHARINE NOWOSAD (born 1900)—

Born in the Ukraine, daughter of Petro Shewchuk and Anna Kushnaravitch. Came to Canada in 1921, and married in 1922. Has two sons. Greek Orthodox. Her copious poetry has been published almost entirely in the *Ukrainian Voice*, Winnipeg. Resident at Oakburn, Manitoba.

RISE INTO LIFE, O WHEAT

Rise into life, O wheat, in the springtime,
Rise in this holy new year!
Quicken, O field, the fair grain that we love so,
Fill out its full, stalwart ear!

Rise into life, O wheat, in the springtime,
Rise in our well-belov'd field!
Pure you were sown, without cockle or darnel,
Ample and pure be your yield!

Then when the cutters come forth to the reaping,
Swinging their sickles of gold,
Songs shall resound in the field that we love so,
Love-songs that never grow old.

Chantings of joy shall break forth at the harvest,
Grateful and glad for the grain
Sown by our race in the fields that we love
And ripen to harvest again.

HONORÉ EWACH (born 1900)—

Born of peasant stock in the Ukraine. Came to Canada as a boy of 9. Graduate in Arts (1929) of the University of Saskatchewan. Has been lecturer on Ukrainian literature at the Peter Mohyla Ukrainian Institute and the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Theological Seminary, Winnipeg. Is now associate editor of the *Ukrainian Voice*. Has published three small volumes of verse: *War Trumpet of the Ukraine* (1931); *He, Whom the World Caught Yet Did Not Catch* (1932); and *Ukrainian Songs and Lyrics* (1933). The most learned and scholarly of the Ukrainian poets of Canada. His *Ukrainian Songs and Lyrics* contains his own verse-translations into English from a considerable range of Ukrainian poetry in the original metres.

THE CHERRY-BLOOM FALLS

The cherry-bloom falls
On the highway dun,
And a mother yearns
For her prison'd son.

The willow-tree droops,
And the river sighs,
And a girl weeps low
Where her lover lies.

The peewit cries low
O'er her rifled nest
And the widow's son
In the earth at rest.

The periwinkle grows
A green living wreath
Where the heroes lie
In the earth beneath.

WILL YOU SO LIVE?

Will you so live that all your days may pass
As fresh forever as the dreams of youth,
While all your thoughts, like flowers in springtime grass,
May by their beauty lure men on to truth?

Will you so live that you each burning day
May grow in mind, and in your soul upreach,
So that when centuries have passed away
Mankind may light its fires at your speech?

EASTER SONG

A voice rings out: "Christ lives again!"
Behold the happy tears of men,
These joyful smiles on haggard faces
And beaming eyes with tearful traces!
A voice rings out: "Christ lives again!"
And Ukrayina sobs: "Amen!"

Across the steppes, in many a field,
Grief mourns for sacred dust conceal'd:
Those martyrs of our blood who plann'd
Sweet freedom for the fatherland.
Sing! For to such as they belong
The strains of resurrection-song.

"Christ lives again!" we sing to-day.
Green are the groves, the willow-spray;
Fair blossoms star the meadow now,
And blossoms grace the orchard-bough;
The field its greenest carpet gives;
Spring's here to-day; and lo, Christ lives!

SYMPHONIC PORTRAIT IN WORDS

Had I the mighty genius of a Rembrandt,
Had I the soul of Fra Angelico,
I'd paint your beauty, nymph, for all to marvel;
Your shining face on canvas straight would go.

Had I the mighty genius of a Mozart,
Blended with dead Chopin's sweet yearning plea,
I'd fashion for the harp-strings of your spirit
A song sublime as ocean's symphony.

Had I the mighty genius of a Shakespeare,
I'd hail thee thus, most beautiful of girls:
"Thy beauty is the tender smile of morning
When dewy dawning gems the grass with pearls!"

IVAN A. KMETA-EFIMOVICH (born 1901)—

Born of peasant stock in the Russian Ukraine. Educated at the seminary in the city of Poltava. Married in Kiev, 1923, to Olga Kirichenko, daughter of an evangelist. Has three children. Came to Canada in 1929 and is now president of the Russian-Ukrainian Baptist Conference of Western Canada. Resident in Saskatoon. Probably the most productive of the Ukrainian writers in Canada. Has published three volumes of poetry: *The Harp* (Kiev, 1924, pp. 176); *Native Melodies* (Kharkov, 1927, pp. 102); and *Fragments* (Winnipeg, 1929, pp. 48). Has also written two novels, *Night* and *The Hurricane*, the former of which was published in Poland in 1930 and has since been translated into Russian, Lettish, and English.

THE SWAN RIVER WHISPERS

'Faster, faster, let us travel!
Farther, farther, towards the sun.
Ever o'er the ancient gravel,
Brave and wakeful let us run."

Thus the Swan's waves, hurrying sunwards,
Speak; but I can ne'er forget
How the silent Don flow'd onwards,
Smiling.—Does it smile there yet?

Whispers of the Swan's low clamor
Gladden now my heart, and wake
Fortitude and dreams of glamor
For my soul to undertake.

Waters, rushing towards the far light,
Whisper ever to the pines,
Kiss the ancient stones by star-light,
Kiss them as the great sun shines.

PRAYER

Again, O Lord, I wish to turn and tell Thee
The load with which my weary soul is bent.
Canadian poplars in the wind are moaning;
That stoop'd one yonder has been crack'd and rent.

I know not why the people are so strange;
Perhaps 'tis but the oddness of my race.
My heart is aching and my frame is tired
Teach me to hope by trusting in Thy grace!

I struggle, and am ready, Lord, to suffer
If, at that price, my people may be blest.
But few there are that hold out hands of welcome.
Few are the souls that hearken to my quest.

Pour out Thy balm upon my wounded spirit!
Make Thou my will immovable as stone!
Before the storm, the poplars still are moaning;
My heart seeks rest, in silence and alone.

CANADIAN AUTUMN

The fires of autumn blaze again.
The poplars rend in pallid fright
Their yellow robes. Across the earth
The wind moans on from morn till night.

"O Autumn, Autumn," sigh the leaves.
"Let us alone, O Wind!" they weep,
"To live in joy is all our wish."—
They whisper, fall, and lie asleep.

I stand and gaze as in a trance:
The ancient land from which I came
Knows other skies beyond the seas,
Yet wind and season are the same.

Such are the ways of human life:
We struggle, sing, and fade as chill
As forests in their autumn fires
That whisper, and anon are still.

IVAN DANYLCHUK (born 1901)—

Born at Canora, Saskatchewan, of farmer parents. Educated in Saskatchewan schools and the University of Saskatchewan. Winner of inter-provincial debate at Winnipeg, 1927. Founded and edited "Normal Echoes", Moose Jaw, 1928. Taught school for a number of years, and is now director of the extension department of the Peter Mohyla Ukrainian Institute, Saskatoon. Has published one striking volume of poetry, *Day Dawns* (Winnipeg, 1929, pp. 56), as well as frequent poems and short stories in the *Ukrainian Voice*.

DAY DAWNS

Over the silent sea of shoreless green
The sun arises, radiant and serene,
And wakens music, ravishingly sweet,
Drawn from the whispering lute-strings of the wheat.
Erect in silken dress, the bearded elves
In dewy basins gaily wash themselves
With cheerful countenance . . .

Watching the lord of light flood all the sky
With magic from the splendor of his eye,
I feel all sorrow from my soul is gone,
Here on the shining prairie, at the dawn.

TO CANADA

O Canada!

Before thy feet my praise I strew
Heartfelt my tribute is and true;
I hail thy prairies, free and wide,
That once saw tattooed Redskins ride
Ere dawn to fight.

The mighty elk once wandered there;
All vastness was the day's calm care
Until the night; ..

Then floating o'er in silent dream
The loitering stars took up the theme.
In autumn, steppe and forest slept;
The poplar-leaves no longer kept
Their gay delight.

To thee, O Canada, be praise
From every guest that hither strays,
Breaking some fate that mars his folk,
Escaping from an ancient yoke
And ageless pain.

All have found refuge in thy grace
And work to justify their race.
To one the serried forest gave
Long years with axe and saw to slave,
And at the last a toiler's grave.

Another from the mine's deep maw,
Slow-moiling, was content to draw
The glittering metal, where he saw
The lure of gain.

A third man plow'd primeval soil,
And mastered Nature with his toil,
Mingling with sweat the wheat he sow'd
And reap'd in flood.

Still others, for the engine-wheel,
Through mountain-pass laid down the steel,
But built that highway with their lives,
Their bones and blood.

O Canada, in grace outspread,
All glory hovers round thy head,
From many a lake and mountain-peak.
And so a race to thee was drawn
With ardent heart.

A kindly foster-mother thou
Hast proved to strangers until now,
But thou hast left thy native sons
To dwindle slow, as luckless ones
In groups apart.

Will they lie long in this duress
Before the dawn of friendliness?
The shadows deepen round their fate,
And zeal would still assimilate
To one bare type.

Forgive, O Canada, nor grieve
If sometimes thou shalt still perceive
The step-son nourished by thy hand
Turn back in love to that far land
From which his flesh and spirit came.
No one can halt the river's flow
Nor autumn birds that southward go.
Quite blind and deaf to all I am,
Men mould me. But their task's a sham:
They cannot yet uproot my heart.

TETIANA KROITOR (born 1904)—

Born at Canora, Saskatchewan, of farming stock. Her maiden name was Shewchuk. Married at 15, and a widow at 27. Has two children, a boy and a girl. Bravely supports her little home by teaching school, and has completed extra-murally more than three years of an Arts course at Queen's University. Her favorite recreation is music and the-training of choirs. Has published numerous short stories and articles as well as poems, all in Ukrainian. Now resident at Yorkton, Saskatchewan.

TOO LATE

Too late, alas, the moon has risen
 To light my lonely pathway home;
 Too late the rain ~~has~~ dizzien
 This rose with blossoms fair as foam.

The moon may rise and gild the shadows;
 I'll find the highway home no more.
 The rain may fall and drench the meadows;
 The rose is withered to the core.

Too late, though once my life was willing,
 A guest comes knocking at my heart;
 Too late my dreams find their fulfilling
 Where once I might have played my part.

THE LAST LUTE-STRING

Sometimes the lute in laughter spoke,
 Sometimes in grief complain'd;
 At last the trembling lute-strings broke,
 And only one remain'd.

Then hope appear'd and play'd upon
 That solitary string;
 And from it, notes of days now gone
 In grace came issuing.

The worn string breaks; its voices die;
 All silent is the lute;
 No longer comes its soft reply:
 It is forever mute.

O soul, thou art the last frail string
 Upon a broken lyre,
 From which Hope's fingers gently bring
 Low strains that still aspire.

And though that final string should break,
 My silent faith will rest
 Upon a Friend who still doth take
 Earth's hopeless to His breast.

